VIDEO GAMES • COMICS • MUSIC

FLUX

ISSUE #3 • FASHION SUCKS

X-MANIA!

WOLVERINE SHREDS ON SNES & GENESIS

PLUS

THE ULTIMATE X-MEN GUIDE: Past, Present and the SHOCKING FUTURE!

REVOLUTION X
TIPS, STRATEGIES & SECRETS

EARTHWORM JIM
THE ONLY CODE YOU'LL EVER NEED!

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KILLER INSTINCT
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GHOST RIDER
WOLVERINE
PUNISHER

THE DARK DESIGN

BEING THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT THEY DO ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH.

In the soul-searing sequel to "Hearts of Darkness," Marvel's baddest good guys face the deadly consequences of their victory over Mephisto & Blackheart!

A 48-page bookshelf by Howard Mackie, Ron Garney, & Al Milgrom.

MARVEL COMICS®

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We're still working on the
"Golf Cart Joy Ride & Crash" feature.
Other than that, it's perfect.

LINKS

the challenge of golf

Links for **Sega CD**™ is the most near-perfect, outrageously realistic golf game available.

How perfect is **Links**? The course mimics Torrey Pines exactly —incredible, 35 mm photography places you behind every tee, fairway, water hazard and bunker, wherever the ball lands, and gives you an accurate view of your next shot. It's so life-like, you can almost smell the green (that's a good thing).

And as you'd expect from any decent golf game, **Links** features
- Tournament play
- Practice mode, Front 9, Back 9
- Instant Replays
- Save player info

But then, **Links** goes far beyond any other golf games to give you in-depth golf features like
- 1 to 6 players (sorry, other games can only handle up to 4)
- Full support of TeeVGolf Club™ for the most accurate, realistic and fun golfing experience available
- Aerial fly-overs of each hole so realistic you may get airsick
- Running stats on how many fish you tag when your ball lands in the water.

Okay, we're just kidding about the last feature.

But as you can see, **Links** for **Sega CD** is the closest thing to perfection when it comes to golf games. So you can bet that if any game comes out with a "Golf Car Donuts On The Fairway" feature in the future, it'll be **Links**.

Virgin

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BEER BELLY
NINETY INCH WAISTS

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1994 The good, the bad, The ugly

With 1994 coming to a close, it gives us a chance to look back and reflect on some of the more memorable events of the last 12 months—those we enjoyed, those that blew our minds, and yes, even those that totally sucked. So grab yourself a big sticky box of Crunch N' Munch, sit back, relax and join us in a retrospective look at 1994, the year that....

...the video game hardware race was taken to new heights of "just wait 'til you see our new system!" grade-school whining.

...grunge was finally knocked from its throne and replaced by the resurgence of punk.

...Marvel's entire line of X-Men titles were canceled.

...Jack Kirby and Kurt Cobain died.

...first-person DOOM-style games became the rage.

...Earthworm Jim and Donkey Kong Country proved that 16 bits are more than enough.

...Motley Crue sold fewer records than Tool.

...The Punisher was sent to crossover hell and met Archie.

...Star Wars got popular again.

...Power Rangers. 'Nuff said.

...blood finally showed up in a SNES cart.

...Batman got a new costume.

...Nintendo's Super Game Boy allowed you to play Game Boy carts on your SNES deck. Maybe next year they'll tell us why anyone would want to?

...OJ

...3DO celebrated the release of its 100th game (but only its fifth good one).

...Jaguar celebrated the release of its fifth game.

...Reed Richards, leader of the Fantastic Four, died (for now).

...Capcom proved they still haven't learned to count to three when it comes to Street Fighter.

...Socially inept people found solace on the Internet (do you think you could, um, e-mail us at fluxman@flux.com? Please?).

...Shaq, Barkley and Jordan starred in their own video games. They should stick to b-ball.

...Collective Soul became really popular for no apparent reason.

...Mega Man got his own cartoon series, the Street Fighter and Double Dragon gangs got their own movies, and Home Improvement—yes, Home Improvement—got its own game.

...Spawn found the guy who killed him.

...a bunch of senators wasted tax dollars arguing about violent video games—but never bothered to actually play them.

...Virtua Racing came home—for a hundred dollars. Hey, that's more than a Genesis system!

...Used carts and widespread rental availability saved gamers from shelling out big bucks for bad games.

...Flux arrived. Yay.

you'll flip over this cool Itchy & Scratchy flip book! (start from the back of the magazine)

THE END

Matt Groening

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FLUX is published quarterly by Harris Publications, Inc., 1115 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10010. Single copy price $3.95 in U.S. and $4.50 in Canada. Submission of manuscripts, illustrations and/or photographs must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited materials. Copyright © 1994 by Harris Publications, Inc. All rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of the publisher is strictly prohibited. PRINTED IN U.S.A. **ISSN #1074-5602**

KEVIN HENSON

MARVEL COMICS

X-MEN®

GAMESMASTER'S LEGACY™ ON SEGA™ GAME GEAR™!

The lethal labyrinth of The Pyramids holds a host of deadly surprises for Rogue - and hidden power-ups as well!

Gambit's staff allows him to fight at any distance. Play your cards carefully, especially with Fabian Cortez in town.

Use Bishop to dodge the deadly tornadoes of Sienna Blaze, and take the fight to her.

SEGA™

COMING SOON! MARVEL COMICS' X-MEN®: CLONE WARS on SEGA GENESIS™

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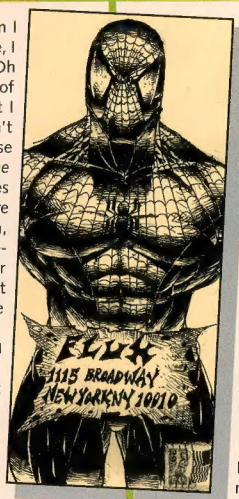
backlash



I must admit that when I first saw your magazine, I thought to myself, "Oh God, not another one of those magazines!" But I was wrong. FLUX isn't another one of those magazines. FLUX is *the* magazine. The articles are cool, but need more cuss words. Oh yeah, here's an idea for "Babewatch"—the Pink Power Ranger. So how 'bout giving me a job as the opinion man?

—JEFF GILLISON

GamePro sucks, but FLUX kicks ass!

—THE KICK ASS CREW

FLUX rocks! I've been waiting for a long time for a magazine with awesome articles that aren't about love problems and beauty tips. Just because I'm a girl doesn't mean I want to know Nikki Taylor's beauty secrets. And regarding Martha Tilton's remarks in the last issue: I found your comments about FLUX to be highly objectionable. I sympathize with your parents for boring such a narrow-minded piece of work. And to her 11-year-old son: Boy, you're one little weenie. You'll probably grow up to be just like your mom.

—JESSICA MARSHALL

Regarding Alex Cipolla's review of Amorphis in the last issue: You are an idiot. Their new album couldn't blow its nose, let alone the "doors off almost every new record out there." There is nothing eerie about their keyboards, either. You want eerie keyboards, try Morbid Angel. Do you even have a clue about what death metal is? It's more than just an unusual name. It's about an attitude, conveying a feeling. In a word: Brutality. Amorphis' new album is about as brutal as a Barney sing-along.

—JASON SULWER

I hate your trashy magazine. It's appalling and my parents threw it away. We even contacted the store where I bought it and told them it was a terrible choice of magazine to be selling. Please clean it up.

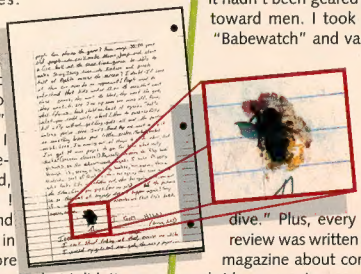
—AN APPALLED, ASTONISHED AND ANGRY PURCHASER

Did you really put a fake ID in your last issue? If so, could you hook me up with one? FLUX is the best magazine I've read in a long time. The whole magazine is well written with just enough swearing and other cool stuff to make it the best reading experience I've ever had. If you don't like FLUX, you're either too old or have a mental problem.

—BRIAN GROSSMAN

Looking through the magazine rack at Keltch's, I saw FLUX and thought, "There's another one of those dumb, waste-of-paper, sorry-excuse-for-a-magazine magazines." But when I saw the "10 Most Violent Video Games" feature, I immediately shouted, "Yes! Cool!" And everyone in the store looked at me—but I didn't care, I had FLUX. That's when I said to myself, "I've got to get this!" (I talk to myself a lot). I got home and looked through the whole thing, and I've come to the conclusion that FLUX is the coolest, most kick-ass magazine in the universe! Hold on a minute, I have to go to go kill this fly that's been bugging me for the past half-hour. I got him! Well, now that I've killed a living, breathing form of life, and got a 25,000 point bonus for doing a 3-hit combo, I should go. Can't wait for the next issue.

—HOUSE



I'd like to compliment you on your magazine. I subscribe to many mags and FLUX is definitely the best I've ever read. Nothing can be cooler—FLUX is the greatest.

—WILLIAM MCDONALD

FLEX is really informative and helpful in selecting comic books and video games. FLEX is very unique. I was wondering if the first issue of FLEX would be worth any money as a collector's item?

—UNSIGNED

At the risk of sounding like a hardcore feminist, I would have liked your magazine a lot more if it hadn't been geared exclusively toward men. I took offense to "Babewatch" and various sexist comments in articles such as the "How To Stage-dive." Plus, every article and review was written by a guy. A magazine about comics, music and video games is a great idea—but people will get turned off if you don't grow up.

—ANGIE BYRON

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Static

STUFF THAT DOESN'T SUCK

CLAW Enforcement

WITH ADAMANTIUM RAGE, X-MEN'S LETHAL ENFORCER MAKES HIS SOLO VIDEO GAME DEBUT

He slices, he dices, his razor-sharp claws give Freddy Krueger bad dreams—he's Wolverine and he's coming to the SNES and Genesis! That's right, America's most popular member of the mighty X-Men is now the star of his own video game: *Wolverine: Adamantium Rage* (Acclaim).

Due for release toward the end of the year, Wolverine is an action-packed adventure/fighting game which sees the steel-fingered mutant searching for keys to his lost past. His quest takes him to the Weapon X laboratory, the icy Arctic region, the Canadian forest, the Inner Circle and finally to the underground sewers of New York City. Along the way, Wolverine faces off against a vicious squad of would-be assassins, including Albert, Bloodscream, Cyber, Lady Deathstrike, Elsie Dee, Lurker, Sabertooth and the deadliest of all, Shinobi Shaw.

But if there's any mutant who can take on each and every one of these super-villains, it's Wolverine. Armed with 17 basic attacks and an arsenal of special moves, Wolverine can out-muscle even the toughest of enemies.

Help Wolverine discover who he is and where he came from. Help him unlock the secrets to his dark past. The answers are there—and they're yours to find. Happy hunting.

WOLVERINE ILLUSTRATION BY TONY DANIELS • COLORED BY DEMETRIUS BASDUKOS

KILLING TIME

KILLER INSTINCT—EXCLUSIVE PIX OF MIDWAY'S LATEST ARCADE KILL-FEST!!

Midway reports that *Mortal Kombat III* won't hit arcades until spring, but they've got another fighting game ready to fill the winter gap—the long-awaited, majorly-hyped *Killer Instinct*. Programmed by Rare for Nintendo's Ultra 64 arcade hardware, *KI* features ten fully-rendered characters, stunning 3-D backgrounds, six attack buttons, buckets of blood, a combo system that tracks up to ten hits, and a whopping 20,000 frames of animation. No wonder it won the AMOA's coveted Best Of Show award. *Killer Instinct* hits arcades nationwide by Christmas; here's some pix to hold you over 'til then.

CHOOSE YOUR FIGHTER
THE WARRIORS OF KILLER INSTINCT:

SPINAL: A skeleton with a scimitar, a shield, and a teleport move in his arsenal.

THUNDER: An axe in each hand topped with a flaming mohawk—that's Mister Thunder to you.

FULGORE: With curved blades for hands and a nasty energy blast, this guy lives up to his name.

GLACIUS: Ice, ice, baby—and the ability to turn his limbs into deadly sharp icicles.

ORCHID: The game's only female character flips, kicks and morphs into a cat; she's both beauty and the beast.

RIPTOR: This reptile does lots of things: breathes fire, whips his tail, and kicks your ass.

MELTDOWN: Molten lava, anyone? Watch for his machine-gun fireballs.

JAGO: A little bulky for a martial artist, but judging by his powerful punches, nobody's going to hold it against him.

SABREWULF: This furry fiend's bark is not worse than his bite.

T.J. COMBO: This *American Gladiators* reject isn't called Combo for nothing; a non-stop string of his punches will have you down for the count.

Knightwear

Keep the cape midnight blue with a lighter blue interior, dye the suit jet black spandex, strap on the yellow utility belt, but drop the pants. These are the kinds of things *Batman* group editor Dennis O'Neill has been dealing with lately, given all the interest surrounding millionaire Bruce Wayne's wardrobe change, and he says he's beginning to feel like he works for *GQ*, not DC.

"I wanted to preserve that distinctive silhouette, but give it a sleeker, more contemporary look," says O'Neill. "The Batman costume is one of the great icons of comic books, but apart from adding a yellow oval around the Bat silhouette in the '60s, it has remained virtually unchanged for 55 years. It was just time to update it."

Last winter, O'Neill asked seven artists to submit designs for a new Batman costume. Of the pieces submitted, Vince Giarrano's (*Batman: Seduction Of The Gun*, *Manhunter*) was chosen as the winning new look. Batman's new duds will debut in *Batman* #515, to be released this December 13.

So exactly how did Batman get those trunks in the first place? Early superhero costumes in the '30s and '40s were based on circus costumes, O'Neill explained, adding that today's "hipper artists are influenced by very different things. I wanted to lose those things that were nonessential to Batman's costume." The Caped Crusader, however, will continue to have multiple variations in costume for special occasions, from a lighter weight suit for scaling walls and rooftops to bulletproof armor.

Maybe he could keep the trunks for surfing.

—ANYA MARTIN

GRUESOME TWOSOME

Everyone knows that the most popular of Christmas-time colors is red. Blood red, that is. And even if you didn't know that, Itchy & Scratchy sure do—and they're getting ready to splash their blood all over the pages of Bongo Comics' forthcoming *Itchy & Scratchy's Holiday Hijinks Special #1*. This 32-page comic—which sees Scratchy finally plotting his revenge against Itchy, his tormentor—will feature all the gratuitous gore we've come to expect from the *Simpson* kids fave TV show. Don't miss it!

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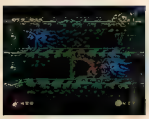
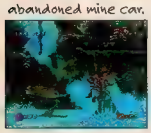
JUST A REMINDER: NOT EVERYONE WINS.

PITFALL™

THE MAYAN ADVENTURE



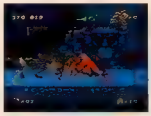
Take a ride on an abandoned mine car.



2000 frames of awesome animation.

Panic is a human reaction. It's natural to panic when you're swinging from a vine above a crocodile pit. Crocodiles feed on panic. They can smell it. So you tell yourself not to panic. But it's too late. By then it's over.

• Pitfall is the vine-swinging adventure that pits you against the evil of the Mayan jungle. Jaguars. Snakes. Rats. Hawks. Quicksand. Evil Mayan spirits. What's your arsenal? A slingshot. A boomerang. Exploding stones.



Explore haunted Mayan ruins.

And, the head on your shoulders.

• It's the legendary Pitfall, back with eye-popping graphics and a pulse-pounding, jungle soundtrack. Run, swing, skate and bungee through incredible, nerve-wracking worlds in the jungle adventure that started it all.

Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure. No, winning isn't everything. But losing bites!

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CADDY SHOCK

If *MK* is two-dimensional gaming and *DOOM* is 3-D, what's in-between? The answer: *Cadillacs And Dinosaurs*. Based on Mark Schultz' popular graphic novel series, and one of the first Sega CD releases from red-hot Rocket Science, the *Cadillacs And Dinosaurs* video game is more than just the generic run-and-gun exploits of comic book heroes Jack Tenrec and Hanna Dundee. *Cadillacs And Dinosaurs* offers a unique "2 1/2-D" environment that truly puts players inside the books: Jump behind the wheel of Tenrec's souped-up '53 Caddy and watch a 2-D Xenozoic world whiz by in 3-D perspective. It's as if you were actually driving straight through one of Schultz' comic panels.

Talk about speed reading. **—DAN AMRICH**

Welcome to the jungle: bob and weave through a future prehistoric world in the new Sega CD, CADILLACS AND DINOSAURS.

Them Bones: The terrible tribe from SKELETON WARRIORS, CBS' hot new Saturday morning cartoon.

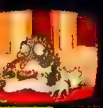
BONE HEADS

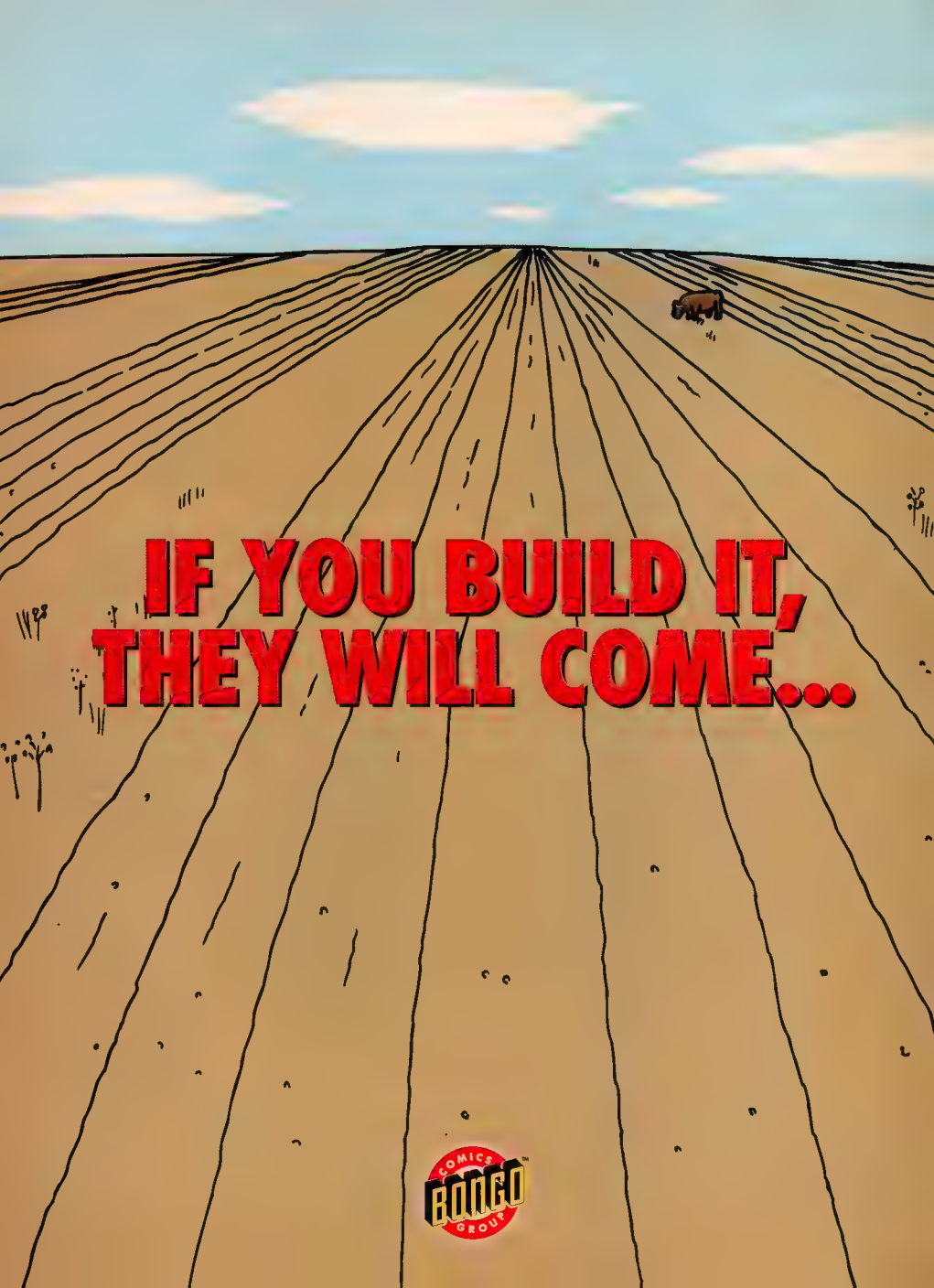
If all you want in a good Saturday morning 'toon is disgusting bad guys, luscious babes and deadly fight scenes, then get ready folks—the Skeleton Warriors are coming.

This new CBS animated series takes place on planet Luminaire, where the ultra-nasty Baron Dark shatters the world's mystic crystal, the Lightstar. For his efforts, he and his army are turned into a horde of living skeletons. Misery loves company, and them bones intend to make the rest of the galaxy share their gruesome fate—or die.

Never fear, a group of good guys is doing all it can to restore Luminaire to its original state. The leader goes by the name Prince Lightstar. Wussy name aside, he packs a big gun and savage armor. And if you think he's rad, wait 'til you catch his prime babe, Talyn. Treat her right, or she'll personally carve your flesh right from your bones.

Skeleton Warriors is one of the hottest looking shows to grace the Saturday morning wastelands in ages. And it should be, as the creative team behind it also worked on the *X-Men* animated series. These guys know how to stage a good fight scene—and *Skeleton Warriors* is loaded with 'em. **—STEVE FRITZ**




IF YOU BUILD IT,
THEY WILL COME...
BONGO COMICS GROUP

GENE POOL

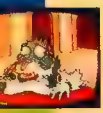
AWESOME GAME GENIE CODES FOR SONIC & KNUCKLES!

SONIC & KNUCKLES
NPKT-AAG0 Start with 99 lives
K2WA-CA4J Infinite lives

SONIC & KNUCKLES (OR WITH SONIC 3 ATTACHED)
AWXT-CA4C Don't lose rings when hit
HXRT-AA6A Infinite time
96BA-CAG6 + 98MA-CAF0 Keep shields (fire, water, lightning) when hit
AKVT-AA76 + AMNA-EA24 Keep rings between levels
ATGT-CA3Y Super shoes don't run out with time
RENT-C6YA Sonic can always double jump (can't use water shield or become Super Sonic)
RENT-C6V6 Sonic can always use Fireball Spin Dash (can't double jump, bounce, or become Super Sonic)
RGSA-A6YY Only 1 blue sphere needed to get a chaos emerald
4ANA-CRA0 High jump for Sonic
2ANA-CWA0 Super jump for Sonic
AANA-C4A0 Mega jump for Sonic
AANA-DYA0 Orbital jump for Sonic
PV5T-CRCR High jump for Knuckles
AB5T-CWCR Super jump for Knuckles
AB5T-C2CR Mega jump for Knuckles
AB5T-DTCR Orbital jump for Knuckles
BLNA-AACR Rings worth 10 in special stage
AENT-CAG6 Only 1 chaos emerald needed to become Super Sonic
AANT-CAG6 Become Super Sonic without any chaos emeralds
AENT-CAHL 1 ring needed to become Super Sonic
AANT-CAGY + AAPA-CAB8 Become Super-Duper Sonic without any emeralds (you still need 50 rings unless using one of the above codes)
AF6A-CACW Only 1 chaos emerald needed to become Super Knuckles
ACCT-CA2R Can't drown

SONIC & KNUCKLES (WITH SONIC 2 ATTACHED)
AX6D-AA3W Knuckles doesn't lose rings when hit
HWLX-GA2Y Infinite time
JV1D-CA6W Infinite lives
PVWD-CRDC High jump for Knuckles
ABWD-CWDC Super jump for Knuckles
ABWD-C2DC Mega jump for Knuckles
ABWD-DTDC Orbital jump for Knuckles

CONFIRMED: SONIC & KNUCKLES IS BACKWARD COMPATIBLE WITH SONIC 1!
They say it couldn't be done—but they were wrong! Yes *Sonic & Knuckles* is also compatible with *Sonic 1* and *Sonic Spinball*! Plug in either game with your *S&K* cart, and a voice will announce, "No way!" Don't believe it—there's always a way! Press A, B and C together and play the 3-D bonus stage from *Sonic 3* (with all-new maps) and get to areas never before possible! Cool deal!



COMIC RELIEF

When it comes to finding out what's going on inside the comic book industry, probably the last place you'd turn to is the TV. Until now, that is. Thanks to *Inside Comix*, a new weekly half-hour program that focuses on comics' hottest artists, reviews the latest titles and comments on comic-related happenings, you can get all the info you need every Saturday at 8:30 a.m. Currently available only in selected markets—52 U.S. cities, to be exact—*Inside Comix* can be found on the Channel America TV Network.

Watch for it.

—ROBERT CONTE

THE BARBI-TWINS

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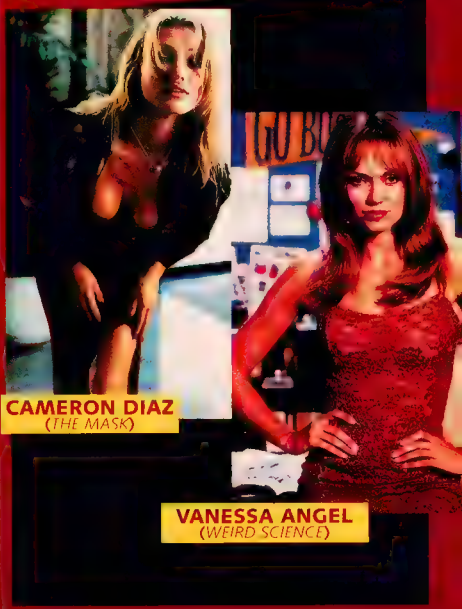
babewatch!



CAMERON DIAZ
(*THE MASK*)

VANESSA ANGEL
(*WEIRD SCIENCE*)

TO

KRUSTYLAND!

KRUSTY COMICS DEBUTS IN JANUARY 1995 WITH THE 3 ISSUE SAGA–"THE RISE AND FALL OF KRUSTYLAND!"

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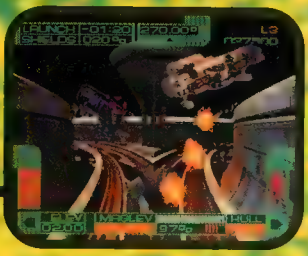
ROCKET SCIENCE.
>>C-OME(IN(XX D-OOYOUOREA-D...TULLY!...IS THAT YOUX?.))))DO YOU R.EAD-ME...TU-LLY?...I'M(GONNA))))FRY YOUR AS*S..))) THIS IZ X. ROCKET.))))SCI-ENCE...GAME.1...LOAD-STAR.DO((()))U READ.)E. .. THIS I() ROCK

GAME 1.▮▮▮LOAD/STAR▮▮▮▮. .<<THE.LE-GEND.,≠OF TULLY(!!BODINE™.AN(*INST..ANTH>CULT..CLASSSIC▮▮ STARRI▮▮NG NED BEATTY))WRITTEX XBY--RON COBB.)))

THES.E ▮▮R(((NOT MOVI!ES)))..▮▮THESE< ARE>>>ANEW BREAKK./THRU.IN**VIDEOG.AMESS.▮▮ ..MOVIE-LIKE XXPER-E ENCES ▮▮▮WITHMORE(REALIZM.MORE EFX.MORE▮▮.THRILLS



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HOLLY.WO-O>▮▮ MEETZ<<SIL.ICON*VAL--LEY..▮▮▮▮▮))..THE CREA>>>TORS R.▮▮ SOME± OF ▮▮TH. PEOP-PLE ▮BEE-HIN.▮▮D ▮▮ALI ENS,))-)THE ABYSS... A-ND >>TER ▮▮▮ ▮MI.NATOR-II

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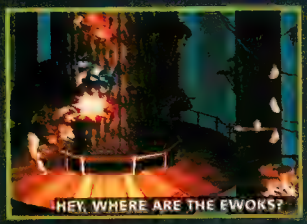
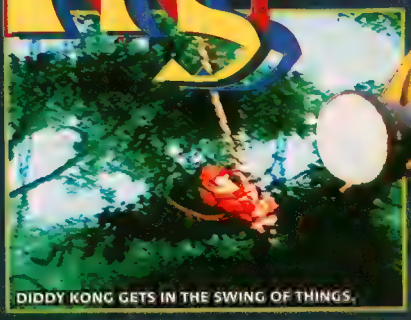
king kong

Goin' ape with the revolutio



HEY, WHERE ARE THE EWOKS?



DIDDY KONG GETS IN THE SWING OF THINGS.

DONKEY KONG A LA CART

CRANKY KONG—STAR OF THE ORIGINAL DK GAME—
OFFERS WORDS OF WISDOM TO THE NEXT GENERATION.

KONG'S FINAL SHOWDOWN!

nary Donkey Kong Country

FLUX FOTO FEATURE

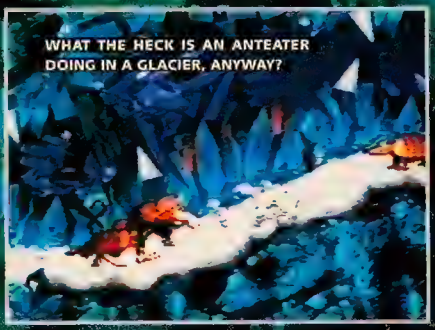
EXCLUSIVE SCENES FROM
NINTENDO'S NEW 32-MEG MONSTER,
DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

WITH OVER 100 LEVELS, YOU'LL WANT TO SAVE YOUR GAME OFTEN.

BEE AFRAID, BEE VERY AFRAID.

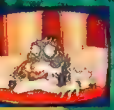
FIND THE HIDDEN KEGS AND ROLL ON 'EM TO TAKE OUT ALL ENEMIES.

MORE DAMN BEES—AVOID 'EM AT ALL COSTS.



WHAT THE HECK IS AN ANTEATER DOING IN A GLACIER, ANYWAY?

TAKE A FLIGHT WITH FUNKY TO EXPLORE THE IDLAND.



IN THIS BONUS ROUND, POUNCE ON THE BLUE GATORS' HEADS TO EARN EXTRA BANANAS.

KONG TAKES A BARREL TO THE HEAD.

MORE BONUS ROUND ACTION WITH EXPRESSO THE OSTRICH.

COLLECT THE GOLDEN LETTERS TO SPELL OUT KONG AND WIN FREE LIVES.

WELCOME TO WINKY'S. NOW WALK THIS WAY.

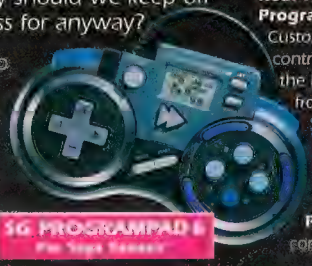
USE THE RHINO'S CHARGE ATTACK TO UNCOVER SECRET AREAS.

IN ONE OF THE MANY BONUS ROUNDS, MATCH THREE ANIMALS TO WIN.

Attitude

An ATTITUDE PROBLEM? No way...not us! But, check it out. Why should we keep off the grass...what's grass for anyway?

O.K., so maybe we do have an attitude. Or...maybe we're just smarter than the people who make the rules. Try our game accessories, and you decide.



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For Super Nintendo

Real-Time Programmability — Customize your controller with all the hot, new moves from Mortal Kombat® II and Super Street Fighter™ II. Or program your best sports moves into a single button. Either way, programmability gives you an attitude your friends can't compete with!

Pre-Programmed Moves — These game pads come loaded with some of the toughest moves ever

from all the classic games. Totally devastate your opponent with these killer pre-programmed moves.

LCD Action Screen — It's like a mini TV screen that shows every move you make. Check out all the action from programmable moves to auto-fire settings to slow motion control. Our unique LCD screen shows you the path to victory!

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Jim class

an inside look at the making of EaRTHWORM JIM with mega-hot programming team Shiny Entertainment.

TO DEFEAT THE SNOWMAN MID-BOSS, WHIP HIM 'TIL HE DROPS. DON'T BOTHER SHOOTING—HE'S IMPERVIOUS TO JIM'S BULLETS.

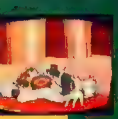
When veteran video game programmer David Perry, known for such significant achievements as Sega's version of *Aladdin*, set out to form the ultimate supergroup of game designers, he looked far beyond the standard overused talent in the gaming industry and instead searched 'round the world for the top developers in their field. And he got what he wanted. The result of his quest is Shiny Entertainment—the hot new programming team responsible for the revolutionary animation and spectacular gameplay in *Earthworm Jim*.

"Compared to what we did with *Aladdin*, *Earthworm Jim* required a much different set up," says Perry. "For *Aladdin*, we had 35 animators, but for *Jim* we had three. Our goal was to really push the limits of technology to make a great game. For example, *Donkey Kong Country* uses rendered graphics, *Mortal Kombat* uses digitized graphics and *Aladdin* used animation—but with *Earthworm Jim*, we've utilized all three. The result is a unique game that you can't get tired of playing or looking at."

"The animation in *Earthworm Jim* is very different from that in a standard video game," adds Executive Producer David Luehmann. "Whereas most games are animated using computers, the animation for *Jim* was done by hand and only colored by the computer. It allows for a very fluid style of animation."

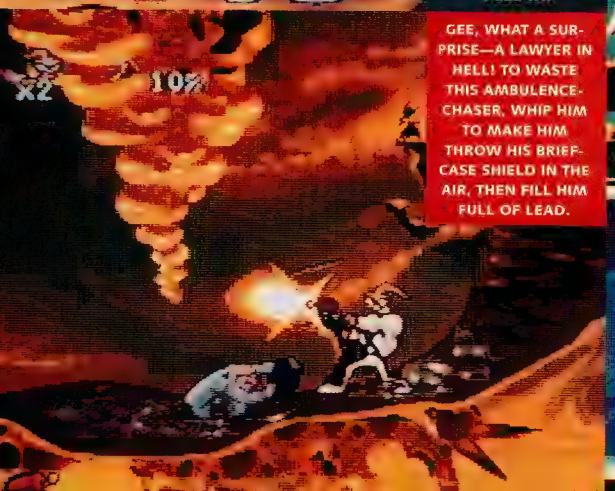
Even with *Aladdin* still commonly hailed as the ultimate in video game animation, Perry is confident that *Earthworm Jim* will set a new standard. "I'm much more proud of *Jim* than I was with *Aladdin*," says Perry. "There's so much more in this game—I'm sure most players will have not seen everything in it."

With today's gaming market being swept away by hype over new and forthcoming super-systems like 3DO, Jaguar, Saturn and Project Reality, *Earthworm Jim* only reinforces the fact that the lowly SNES and Genesis machines are still largely untapped platforms. "A lot of other developers can't bear to make games for anything less than a 3DO, Jaguar or Sony Playstation," says Perry. "As far as we're concerned, a lot of the 32- and 64-bit machines aren't even ready yet, and until that day comes, we plan to continue making games like *Earthworm Jim* for the SNES and Genesis."



TO KEEP PETER PUPPY FROM TURNING INTO THIS HOUND FROM HELL, WHUP HIS BUTT TO MAKE HIM JUMP OVER THE GAPS.

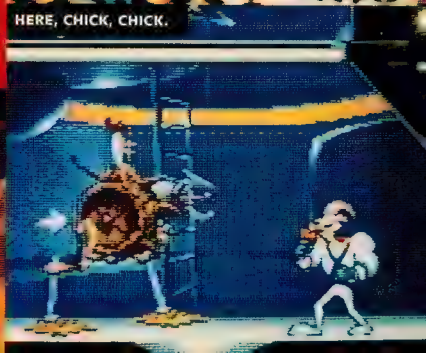
IS THAT JIM'S WHIP OR IS HE JUST GLAD T'SEE YA?



GEE, WHAT A SURPRISE—A LAWYER IN HELL! TO WASTE THIS AMBULENCE-CHASER, WHIP HIM TO MAKE HIM THROW HIS BRIEFCASE SHIELD IN THE AIR, THEN FILL HIM FULL OF LEAD.

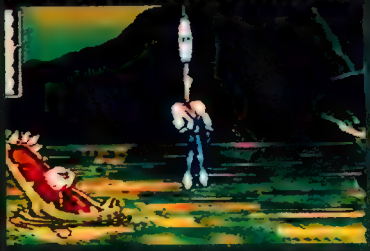
WHEN IN DOUBT, SHOOT.

HERE, CHICK, CHICK.

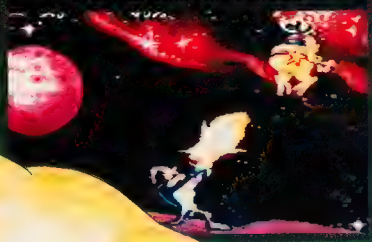


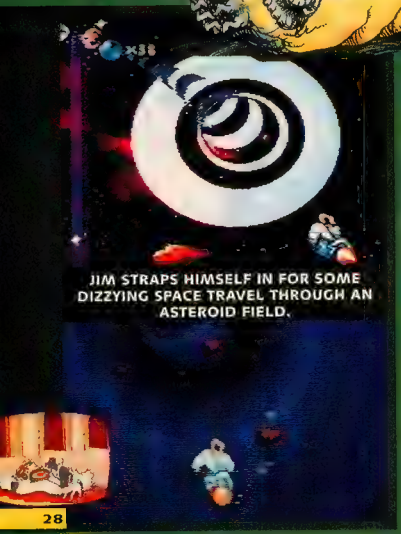
PETER PUPPY SHREDS HIS SKIN.

HANGIN' BY A THREAD IN THE BUNGEE BATTLE.



JIM GOES HEAD TO HEAD WITH PSYCROW. TO BEAT HIM, WHIP, THEN SHOOT.

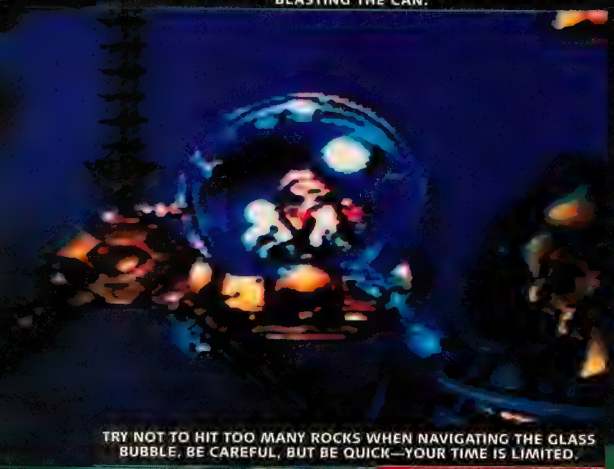




JIM STRAPS HIMSELF IN FOR SOME DIZZYING SPACE TRAVEL THROUGH AN ASTEROID FIELD.

THESE DOGS ARE A REAL PAIN IN THE BUTT.

TO DEFEAT THE GARBAGE PAIL MID-BOSS IN NEW JUNK CITY, AVOID THE OBJECTS THAT FALL FROM THE SKY, THEN START BLASTING THE CAN.

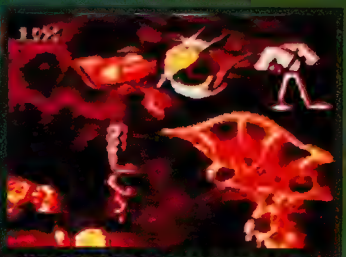


TRY NOT TO HIT TOO MANY ROCKS WHEN NAVIGATING THE GLASS BUBBLE. BE CAREFUL, BUT BE QUICK—YOUR TIME IS LIMITED.

SNES debug

To find the hidden programmer's debug menu in the SNES version of Earthworm Jim—and be able to select the level of your choice—just do the following:

At any time during game play, press pause
Hold down left arrow key and press A
Release left arrow and A keys
Press: bxaabxa



MORE EXCLUSIVE SCENES FROM EARTHWORM JIM!

DAMME GOOD

They don't show Van Damme's butt in the trailer—and that's a good sign. STREET FIGHTER makes the jump from video game screen to silver screen.

IF YOU SNEAK INTO ONLY ONE HOLIDAY BLOCKBUSTER THIS SEASON, make it the big-screen adaptation of *Street Fighter*. Capcom coughed up $40 million to bring everyone's favorite six-button punchfest to your local $6 movie house, complete with Jean-Claude Van Damme playing Colonel Guile. He, along with Ken (*Under Seige*'s Damian Chapa), Ryu (Byron Mann of *Bloodsport II*), and Cammy (played by Aussie one-hit wonder Kylie Minogue), is out to rescue the hostages kidnapped by M. Bison (the late Raul Julia, *The Addams Family*'s Gomez Addams). The movie will features every major character from the *SF* game series, except Akuma and Fei Long. In their place will be a new fighter named Capt. Sawada. Sawada will appear in the new *SF* arcade game, which is due out shortly after the film's Dec. 23 release.—**ROBERT CONTE**

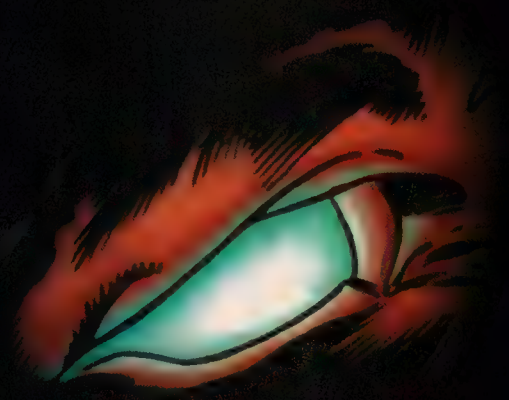
UNNATURAL BORN KILLERS!

RUNE
A 10,000-year-old vampire stalks the earth!

PRIMEVIL
An ultra's corrupted skin gains undead life!

NECROMANTRA
Mantra possessed by the soul of evil!

LORD PUMPKIN
The resurrected fire-breathing prince of chaos!



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MORTAL KOMBAT II

COMPLETE TIPS, MOVES & TRICKS

Everything you need to know to kick Shao Khan's ass. It's a bloodbath (bring a mop).

We received tons of letters asking for a full list of moves and codes for the home versions of *Mortal Kombat II*. And even though it seems like some hotshot *MKII* players were born with the know-how to pull off Kintaro Morphs and Kisses Of Death, everybody has to learn from somewhere. So, here's an exhaustive collection of *MKII* info, including basic attacks, finishing moves, hidden characters, all the SNES and Genesis special codes—and even something called a Fergality....

STANDARD MOVES (all characters)

SWEEP	B + LK
ROUNDHOUSE	B + HK
UPPERCUT	D + HP
THROW	F + LP
POWER PUNCH	F, HP

High Punches inflict greater damage than Low Punches, but Low Punches can hit crouching opponents. Kicks do more damage than punches, but you can land punches quicker and in rapid succession. Power Punches do more damage than regular punches.

SPECIAL TRICKS

When it says "Finish Him!" on the Dead Pool stage, hold LP + LK and throw an uppercut. Your will knock your opponent into the pool of acid for a Fatality. All characters can perform this finishing move. When the skeleton floats to the surface, hold the joystick Down and, for whatever reason, the skeleton will say "Hello!" with a British accent.

Wish you could make two-player games more fair? Let the computer randomly select your character. On the player select screen, press Up + Start while the cursor is on your upper corner (Liu Kang for Player 1, Reptile for Player 2).

If you do the Pit Fatality in the Kombat Room, knocking the opponent onto the spikes, press down on both joysticks before the opponent hits the ceiling. He will slide off the spikes and smash into the ground.

For information on Raiden's "Fergality" finishing move, found only on the Genesis version, see Raiden's section.

SPECIAL MOVES

BARAKA

Spark	D to B, HP
Blade Slice	B + HP
Slice-N-Dice	B, B, B, LP
Pit	F, F, D, HK
Babality	F, F, F, HK
•Friendship	U, F, F, HK
Impale Fatality	B, F, D, F, LP (Close)
•Decapitate Fatality	B, B, B, B, HP (Close)

JOHNNY CAGE

Low Shadow Bolt	D to F, LP
High Shadow Bolt	D to B, HP
Shadow Uppercut	B, D, B, HP
Shadow Kick	B, F, LK
Nutcracker	LP + BL
Gym Kick	F + LK
Pit	D, D, D, HK

Babality	B, B, B, HK
Friendship	D, D, D, HK
Rip in Half Fatality	D, D, F, F, LP (Close)
Decapitate Fatality	F, F, D, U (Close)
Triple Decapitate	D+LK+BL+LP (Close)

(must decapitate first to pull off the full trio)

JAX

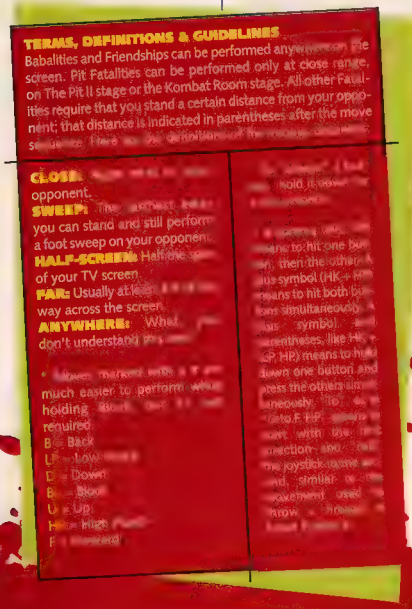
Overhead Hammer	F + HP
Grab 'n' Pound	F, F, LP, rapid LP
Multiple Throw	F + LP, rapid HP
Sonic Boom	F to D to B, HK
Ground Pound	Charge LK 3 sec.
Backbreaker	BL in air
•Pit	U, U, D, LK
•Babality	D, U, D, U, LK
•Friendship	D, D, U, U, LK
Head Crush Fatality	LP + (F, F, F) (Sweep)
Arm Rip Fatality	BL, BL, BL, BL, LP (Sweep)

KITANA

Fan Lift	B, B, B, HP
Fan Throw	F, F, HP + LP
Fan Slice	B + HP
Zip Punch	F to D to B, HP
Pit	F, D, F, HK
•Babality	D, D, D, LK
•Friendship	D, D, D, U, LK
Decapitate	BL, BL, BL, HK (Close)
Kiss of Death	LK + (F, F, D, F) (Close)

KUNG LAO

Hat Throw	B, F, LP (U or D guides hat)
Garbage Can	BL + (U, U), rapid LK
Teleport	D, U
Torpedo Kick	D + HK in air
Pit	F, F, F, HP
Babality	B, B, F, F, HK
Friendship	B, B, B, D, HK
•Hat Split Fatality	F, F, F, LK (Sweep)
Decapitate Fatality	LP + (B, F) (Far) (aim at their neck!)


TERMS, DEFINITIONS & GUIDELINES
Babalities and Friendships can be performed anywhere on the screen. Pit Fatalities can be performed only at close range, on The Pit II stage or the Kombat Room stage. All other Fatalities require that you stand a certain distance from your opponent; that distance is indicated in parentheses after the move
CLOSE:
opponent.
SWEEP:
you can stand and still perform a foot sweep on your opponent.
HALF-SCREEN:
of your TV screen.
FAR:
way across the screen.
ANYWHERE:
don't understand
much easier to perform while holding
required.
Back
Down
Up

MORTAL KOMBAT II COMPLETE TIPS MOVES & TRICKS

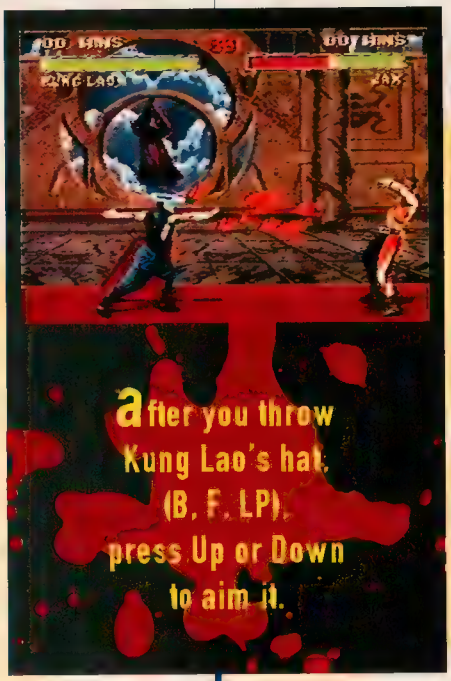
LIU KANG

High Fireball	F, F, HP
Low Fireball	F, F, LP
Bicycle Kick	Charge LK 4 sec.
Flying Kick	F, F, HK
Pit	B, F, F, LK
Babality	D, D, F, B, LK

Friendship	F, B, B, B, LK
•Cartwheel Fatality	Joystick 360 away from enemy (Anywhere)
Dragon Munch	D, F, B, B, HK (Close)

MILEENA

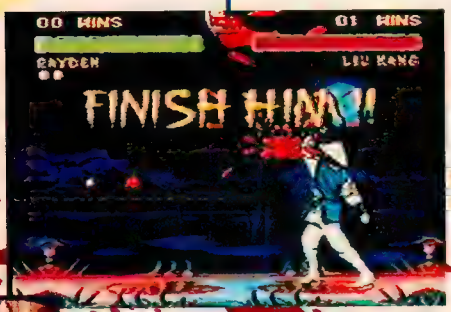
Sai Throw	Charge HP 2 sec.
Teleport Kick	F, F, LK
Roll	B, B, D, HK
Pit	F, D, F, LK
Babality	D, D, D, HK
•Friendship	D, D, D, U, HK
Sai Stab Fatality	F, B, F, LP (Close)
•Suck 'N' Blow	Charge HK 3 sec. (Close)



RAIDEN

Shocking Grasp	Charge HP 3 sec.
Torpedo	B, B, F
Lightning Bolt	D to F, LP
Teleport	D, U
•Pit	U, U, U, HP
•Babality	D, D, U, HK
Friendship	D, B, F, HK
Fergality (Genesis)	B, B, B, BL (Sweep)
Electrocution Fatal.	Charge LK, rapid LK + BL (Close)
Uppercut Fatality	Charge HP 7 sec. (Close)

RAIDEN FERGALITY: To perform Raiden's Genesis-only Fergality, turn on "Ooh, Nasty!" from the cheat menu. At the Armory, defeat your opponent using only kicks on both rounds. Execute the move listed above, and your opponent is turned into a small man with a large head, while the screen announces "Fergality!"



REPTILE

Acid Spit	F, F, HP
Invisibility	BL + (U, U, D), HP
Energy Orb	B, B, HP + LP
Slide	B + BL + LP + LK
Pit	D, D, F, F, BL
Babality	D, D, B, B, LK

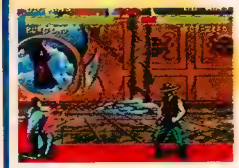
Friendship	B, B, D, LK
Yummy Fatality	B, B, D, LP (Half-screen)
Unseen Death Fatal.	F, F, D, HK (Close) (must be invisible!)

SCORPION

Harpoon Throw	B, B, LP
Teleport Punch	D to B, HP
Leg Takedown	D to B, LK
Air Throw	BL in air
Pit	D, F, F, BL
Babality	D, B, B, HK
Friendship	B, B, D, HK
•Incinerate Fatality	U, U, HP (Half-screen)
•Toasty Incinerate	D, D, U, U, HP (Anywhere)
Neck Slash Fatality	HP + (D, F, F, F) (Close)

SUB-ZERO

Deep Freeze	D to F, LP



Ground Freeze	D to B, LK
Slide	B + BL + LP + LK
Pit	D, F, F, BL
Babality	D, B, B, HK
Friendship	B, B, D, HK
Ice Grenade Fatality	LP + (B, B, D, F) (Far)
Freeze Uppercut (to freeze)	F, F, D, HK (Sweep)
(to shatter)	F, F, HP (Close)

SHANG TSUNG

1 Flaming Skull	B, B, HP
2 Flaming Skulls	B, B, F, HP
3 Flaming Skulls	B, B, F, F, HP
Scorpion Morph	BL + (U, U)
Kitana Morph	BL + BL
Kung Lao Morph	B, D, B, HK
Jax Morph	B, B, D, LP

Sub-Zero Morph	F, D, F, HP
Jax Morph	D, F, B, HK
Mileena Morph	Charge HP 2 sec.
Raiden Morph	D, B, F, LK
Liu Kang Morph	B, F, F, BL
Reptile Morph	BL + (U, D), HP
Baraka Morph	D, D, LK
Pit	BL + (D, D, U), D
Babality	B, F, D, HK
•Friendship	B, B, D, F, HK

JADE

Fight a one-player game on the match before the "?" match. Win at least one round of the match using only LK (no punches, HK, or BL). You'll warp immediately to Jade. You only need to win a round, not the match.

•Soul Stealer Fatality	U, D, U, LK (Close)
Body Explosion	Charge HK 3 sec. (Sweep)
Kintaro Morph	Charge LP 25 sec. (Sweep)

SECRET CHARACTERS!!

SMOKE

Fight on The Portal (1 or 2 player) and throw a lot of uppercuts. When Dan Forden, the "Toasty!!" sound designer, appears in the lower right corner, hold Down and Start to warp to Smoke. On SNES, you'll fight in Goro's Lair; on Genesis, you'll go to the Blue Portal.

NOOB SAIBOT

Win 50 consecutive battles, 1 or 2 player. If you lose, you stay at 49

wins, so you can just keep winning one battle until you manage to beat him. You *must* beat him to get over 50 wins in the high score table.

High Punches inflict greater damage than Low Punches, but Low Punches can hit crouching opponents. KICKS do more damage than punches, but you can land punches quicker and in rapid succession.

AWESOME CODES!!

GENESIS TEST MODE

Like the original *MK* Genesis cart, there's a DULLARD-like Test Mode that lets you change all sorts of game aspects. In the Options menu, move the cursor to "Done!" and press L, D, L, R, D, R, L, L, R, R. You'll now have access to "Test Modes," which let you make players indestructible or terribly weak, play on any background, choose which battle you'd like to start the game on, set the credits to Free Play, and make the computer do specific finishing moves whenever it wins.

SNES WARPS

Enter these codes at the Character Selection screen:

U, D, D, L, R, Select - Fight Jade

L, U, D, D, R, Select - Fight Noob Saibot

U, L, U, U, R, Select - Fight Smoke
U, D, D, R, R, Select - Fight Kintaro
R, U, U, R, L, Select - Fight Shao Khan
L, U, R, D, L, Select - 30 Kredits
D, U, R, U, L, Select - Computer takes more and gives less damage
U, U, L, U, D, Select - Gives you more time to do a fatality

To watch Shao Khan taunt the Acclaim logo and Kintaro destroy it, hold down the L and R buttons while turning on the game.

Continue holding down L and R and hit Start to enter a 4 on 4

endurance match for 2 players. Choose 4 characters and battle a friend. When one character dies, the next jumps in to take their place without missing a beat. When choosing characters for the 4 on 4, hit Select for a random select.

Special thanks to Grant Bugher and Eric Holma for their valuable assistance!

PROFESSOR X IS DEAD
AND HIS STRUGGLE FOR PEACE BETWEEN MUTANTS AND HUMANS WAS NOTHING MORE THAN A DREAM.
REALITY BEGINS THIS DECEMBER IN
X-MEN: ALPHA #1
48 PAGES BY
SCOTT LOBDELL, FABIAN NICIEZA, MARK WAID AND ROGER CRUZ.
MARVEL COMICS

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WELCOME TO T

Level skips and stage selects for the

As one of video gaming's oldest cheating treasures, the level skip code deserves a long, detailed analysis of its rich history ...aw, screw it. Here's a truckload of awesome stage select codes for 50 SNES, Genesis, Game Gear and Sega CD games.

compiled by DAN AMRICH

AERO THE ACRO*BAT

SNES (SUNSOFT)

At the Start/Options screen, press Down, A, Down, Y, Down, A, Down, and Y. Then, during the game, pause and press Up, X, Down, B, Left, Y, Right, A, L and R. Unpause and hit Select to skip to the end of the level. Also, by pressing button R during the Bonus Point tally at the end of a round, you get a full level select menu.

GENESIS (SUNSOFT)

At the Start/Options screen, press C, A, Right, Left, C, A, Right, and Left. You'll hear a sound. During the game, pause and hit Up, C, Down, B, Left, A, Right, and B. You'll hear a sound. Hit A and C to bring up the level skip menu.

ALADDIN

GENESIS (SEGA/VIRGIN)

Pause the game and enter A, B, B, A, A, B, B, A to skip to the end of the level. For a full level select menu and more, press A, C, A, C, A, C, A, C, B, B, B and B at the Options menu.

SNES (CAPCOM)

In the Options menu, press L, R, Start, Select, X, Y, A, and B on controller 2. Go back to the main menu and select your level with the number listed under the Aladdin logo; hold L and R while you move the D-pad to change the number.

ALIEN 3

GENESIS (ARENA)

At the Options menu, enter C, Up, Right, Down, Left, A, Right, Down with controller 2. During the game, pause and hit C, A, B. Unpause and skip to the stage's end.

BATMAN RETURNS

SEGA CD (KONAMI)

Set the game type to "Driving Only" at the Options menu. Hold Left and press B at options 1 through 7 and back to 1, in order. A chime will confirm. Set the options as you wish, and during play, pause the game and hit C to skip to the next level. For a full stage select, choose "Platform Only." Hold Left and press B at options 1, 7, 1, 6 and 7. Set your options, select a stage number, hold Left and press B.

BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA

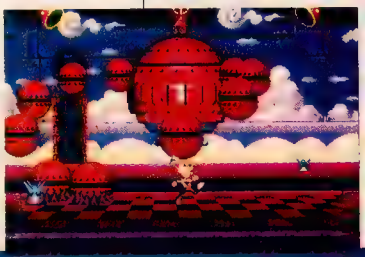
GENESIS (SONY IMAGESOFT)

When the battlefield scrolls across the screen, hit Down, Right, A, C, Up, Left and Up (yep, you're spelling DRACULA). During the game, pause and press Up; those numbers represent your stage select. Choose a number and go to that level.

CASTLEVANIA: BLOODLINES

GENESIS (KONAMI)

At the title screen, enter Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B and A. The number that appears at the top of the screen is the stage select.



CHUCK ROCK

GENESIS (VIRGIN)

While the band plays at the title screen, enter A, B, Right, A, C, A, Down, B, Right and A. Then press and hold Start, A, B, and C. In the game, press and hold Up and A to skip the level.

CLIFFHANGER

SEGA CD (SONY IMAGESOFT)

Using controller 2, press Start, C, B, A, Right and Left at the title screen. During play, pause and hit C to skip the level.

COOL SPOT

GENESIS (VIRGIN)

Press Start to pause the game, and key in A, B, A, C, B, A, C, A, B, C, A, C. You'll zoom ahead to the end of that level.

DYNAMITE HEADDY

GENESIS (SEGA)

At the title screen, press Start. With the cursor positioned on "Start Game," press C, A, Left, Right, B. A sound lets you know you've done it right; press Start to access the stage select.

HE LAST LEVEL

world's 50 most popular video games!

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

GENESIS/SEGA CD (SEGA)

Make Ecco turn around, and pause the game halfway through his turn, as his face faces you. Press Right, B, C, B, C, Down, C and Up. A debug menu will appear, complete with stage select.

GOLDEN AXE

GENESIS (SEGA)

Select Arcade mode from the Options menu. At the character select screen, press the D-pad Down/Left and press A and Start. The number that appears is the stage select; press Up and Down to change levels.

THE JUNGLE BOOK

GENESIS (VIRGIN)

While paused, enter B, A, A, B, B, A, A, B, A, B, B, A, A, B, B, A to skip to the next level.

SNES (VIRGIN)

At the Virgin logo, quickly enter Up, Up, Up, B, B, Y, Y, Select, Up, Down, Left, Right, B, Up and Y. At the main menu, highlight Options and press Start. You'll get a cheat menu with a level select.

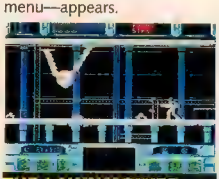
JURASSIC PARK

GENESIS (SEGA)

Enter the Options menu and exit. Punch in the password NYUKNYUK, but don't exit the password screen. Highlight the left or right arrow icons, and press and hold A, B, C and Start in that order. "Second Controller Enabled" will appear; highlight Exit and press any button to get a stage select menu that works for Dr. Grant or the Raptor.

SEGA CD (SEGA)

Put an egg in the incubator in Wu's office and go to the control room to save your game in the computer. Exit the control room and hold Start on controller 2 until the Node Jumper—the stage select menu—appears.



THE LAWNMOWER MAN

SNES (T*HQ)

First, pause the game and enter B, R, A, Select, Select, Y, A, B, Y, A and B. Unpause the game, then pause again and press A, L, L to access the stage select.

MEGA TURRICAN

GENESIS (DATA EAST)

Pause the game during play and press Right, Left, Down, Right and B. Unpause and you'll skip to the next level.

MORTAL KOMBAT II

SNES (ACCLAIM)

Enter these codes at the Character Selection screen and you'll go straight to that character:

Jade: U, D, D, L, R, Select

Noob Saibot: L, U, D, D, R, Select

Smoke: U, L, U, U, R, Select

Kintaro: U, D, D, R, R, Select

Shao Khan: R, U, U, R, L, Select

REN & STIMPY: VEEDIOTS!

SNES (T*HQ)

As "Veediots!" starts to appear, enter L, R, A, L, R, L, B, R, X. Choose your stage with the numbers at the bottom of the screen.

ROAD AVENGER

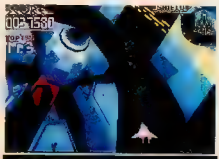
SEGA CD (RENOVATION)

At the Game Start screen, push Up to move the cursor to Options Mode (don't use Down or it won't work). In the Options menu, put the cursor next to "Players" and press A six times. When you start the game, a stage select will appear. Or, follow the same procedure as above but enter A, A, A, A, B, A instead of all A's. Go back to the main menu and enter the Options Mode again (still pressing Up only, not down) and press A, A, A, A, B, C with the cursor next to "Players." Then, during the game, press Start to skip to the end of that stage.

ROBO ALESTE

SEGA CD (TENGEN)

At the Option menu, set the Sound to 3A, the Level to Hard and the CD-DA nubmer to the stage of your choice. Hold B and hit Start. A Continue option will appear; select it and start on the selected stage.



SILPHEED

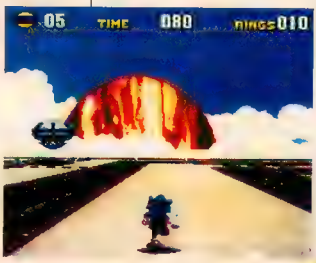
SEGA CD (SEGA)

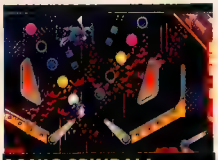
During the introduction, press Down, Down, Up, Up, Right, Left, Right, Left, A, B and Start. Press Start at the title screen, and a stage select will appear.

SONIC CD

SEGA CD (SEGA)

When "Press Start" is flashing on the title screen, press Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, and B. A stage select menu will appear.





SONIC SPINBALL

GENESIS (SEGA)

At the Options menu, press A, Down, B, Down, C, Down, A, B, Up, A, C, Up, B, C, Up. A sound will play if you've done it correctly. Now, at the main title screen, press A and Start to begin on Level 2, B and Start for Level 3 and C and Start for Level 4.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

GENESIS (SEGA)

At the title screen, hold A and press Up, Down, Left and Right. If you hear a chime, you've done it right. Hit Start, and you can choose any stage. Or, if that doesn't work correctly, hold A after you enter the directional moves, and hold Start and A for the stage select menu. Some copies of the game require the first method, and some the second.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

GENESIS (SEGA)

Go to the Sound Test in the Options menu. Play sounds 19, 65, 9 and 17 using button B. A chime will signal that you've done it right. Press Start, and when the title screen appears, hold button A and press Start. The stage select menu will appear.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 3

GENESIS (SEGA)

Push Up, Up, Down, Down, Up, Up, Up, Up after the Sega logo appears. Do it fast! Then, press Down while the cursor's on "Competition Mode" and a Sound Test appears. Choose your starting level from there!

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

SNES (SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE)

At the title screen, enter Y, Y, X, X, A, A, B, and B. You'll hear a confirmation sound. Start the game, pause it, and press Y to bring up the level select menu.

STREETS OF RAGE

GENESIS (SEGA)

Hold Down/Right and all three buttons on controller 2 while selecting Options on the main menu. A stage select will appear on the Options menu.

Game Gear (Sega)

Choose the Sound Test from the Options menu. Select sound 11 and press buttons 1 and 2 simultaneously to get a stage select menu and more.

STREETS OF RAGE 2

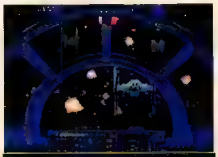
GENESIS (SEGA)

Hold down A and B on controller 2 and select the Options screen with controller 1 to call up a stage select and some other handy options.

STREETS OF RAGE 3

GENESIS (SEGA)

At the select menu, highlight Options, hold B and Up, then press Start. A chime will sound and a stage select option will appear.



SUPER EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

SNES (JVC)

Access the Debug mode by entering A, B, Y, X, A, B, Y, X, A, B, A, B, Y, X, X, Y, A, B, Y, and X. During play, press L and R on controller 2. The stage select is within the debug menu, along with other neat stuff.

SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

SNES (CAPCOM)

Scroll down to Exit on the Option menu with controller 1. Then hold L and Start on controller 2 while pressing Start on controller 1. A stage select menu will appear.

SUPER STAR WARS

SNES (JVC)

At the title screen, press A, A, A, X, B, B, B, Y, X, X, X, X, A, Y, Y, Y, Y, B. The Jawa will scream if you've done it right. Press L and R on controller 2 during play to call up the debug mode, which contains a level select.

SUPER TURRICAN

SNES (SEIKA)

Pause the game and hit Right, Left, Down, Right, A and then Start to skip the current level.

T2: THE ARCADE GAME

SNES (LJN)

At the title screen, press Left, Up, Right, Up, Left, Left, Left, Right, Down, Down. At the high score screen, enter Right, Up, Up, Left, Right, Right, Right, Left, Down, Down, Right, Up. During play, press the L and R buttons to skip to the end of the stage.

GENESIS (LJN)

Press Up, Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, Left, Right at the title screen; Arnie will say "Excellent." During the game, pause and press B and C or the top two Menacer buttons to skip a level.

TAZ-MANIA

GENESIS (SEGA)

When the title screen appears, press A, B, C and Start on both controllers. To skip levels during the game, pause and press A, B and C simultaneously on controller 1; to choose your level, pause and press C. Select your level in the row of numbers that appears, and unpause.

SNES (Sunsoft)

At the Options menu, press A, Y, A, Y, X, Y, B, A, R, and L to call up a stage select.

TEMPEST 2000

JAGUAR (ATARI)

Highlight the type of game you want to play at the main menu, then hold 1, 4, 7 and * while pressing the A button. Then, during play, press the Option button to skip to the next level. If you want to warp straight to the bonus stages, hit the 6 and 9 buttons before pressing Option. The bonus skip, however, only works in the "Tempest 2000" mode.

THE TERMINATOR

SEGA CD (VIRGIN)

First, enter the secret options menu by pressing Right on the D-pad and B, C, B, B at the Start Game/Options screen. Enter the secret menu and hold Left while pressing B, C, B, C. The cursor will change to a square. Go to "Run Game" and press A for the level select.

WING COMMANDER: THE SECRET MISSIONS

SNES (MINDSCAPE)

Take controller 2 and hold L, R, Select and Start at the title screen. If you did it right, the music will fade. A menu appears with series and mission select options plus other goodies.

WOLFENSTEIN 3D

SNES (IMAGINEER)

Hold the R button on Controller 1 and turn on your SNES. Keep the R button pressed throughout the intro until the main title screen appears. Press Up and Select—fast—and a level select grid pops up. Or, just pause the game and enter Up, B, R, B at the map screen to move one level at a time.

JAGUAR (ATARI)

Put the cursor next to "New Game" at the main menu and hold 1, 3, 7, and 9 on the keypad. The level select menu will appear. To skip levels one at a time during the game, press 4, 7, 8, 6 on the controller.

X-MEN

GENESIS (SEGA)

First, make sure only controller 1 is connected. Hold Down, A and C when the title screen appears. When Magneto appears, unplug your controller, put it into port 2 and hit Start. When "Difficulty Select" is displayed, change the controller back to port 1 and hit start. In the Danger Room, head right until you reach the paneled area. Each panel represents a level in the game; stand in front of the level you want and press Down and C to go there.

Evil shines darkest before the dawn.

SHINING FORCE II

Enough talking! Hand over that jewel. In return, I'll spare Sir Astrail
INCREDIBLE CONCENTRATION MEANS YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY ON YOUR GUARD AT ALL TIMES!
Available only on SEGA
GENESIS
GAME GEAR
LIKE KRAKEN HEAD MAKE YOUR
CHARACTERS BUILD YOUR ARMY'S STRENGTH AS YOU GROW AND CHANGE.
SEGA
Shining Force II is available only on Genesis.
Shining Force: The Sword of Hajya is available only on Game Gear.

-5-3-7214 SHAQ-FU ENFORCER OF JUSTICE 42-FA[redacted]9

HE WEARS

SIZE 22 EEE SHOES

ON HIS FEET.

HIS OPPONENTS

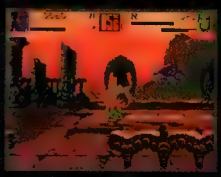
USUALLY WEAR THEM

ON THEIR FACE.

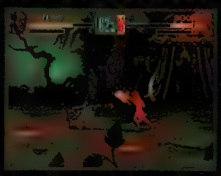
ELECTRONIC ARTS®

SEGA GENESIS VERSION COMES WITH A SINGLE FROM SHAQ'S NEW RAP CD "SHAQ-FU : DA RETURN."

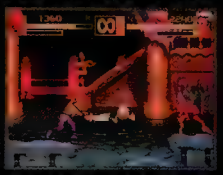
WELCOME TO KUNG-FU, SHAQ-STYLE. LIFE-LIKE ANIMATION FROM DELPHINE (THE MAKERS OF FLASHBACK) TURNS SHAQ LOOSE ON THE MANY FACES OF EVIL. FROM HIS MASSIVE HANDS TO HIS SIZE 22EEE FEET. YOU'LL FEEL EVERY SINGLE BRAIN-ALTERING BLOW.



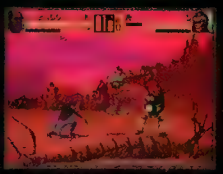
SHAQ-HOUSE DEVASTATES MEPHIS THE SCUMBAG.



SHAQ-ATTAQ ROCKS THE VOO-DOO QUEEN'S WORLD.



TWO OF SHAQ'S ENEMIES, BEAST AND RAJA, GO AT IT.



SHAQ'SMAQ BRINGS THE EVIL AUROCH TO HIS KNEES.

PSSSST. IT IS A WISE MAN WHO LOOKS FOR EXCLUSIVE SHAQ-FU HINTS AND TIPS IN CLASSIC 4-SPORT TRADING CARDS.

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Classic 4

SEGA

REVOLUTION X: THE BASICS

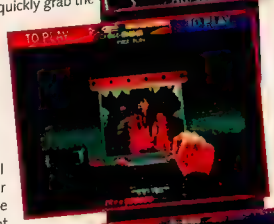
• Practically anything can be shot for points. Most walls can be destroyed, and some reveal bonus items. In stages with trees, shoot 'em 'til they burn. In fact, in the Amazon, if you set the jungle on fire, the tribesmen can't hide behind the trees and peg you so easily.

• Boxes occasionally will drop from the top of the screen. Shoot them to reveal the powerups inside, then shoot the powerups. Powerups include CDs (Silver for 3 CDs, Gold for 10 CDs), a SuperGun (which causes heavier damage), Laserdiscs (powerful flaming CDs), a Shield (temporarily prevents being damaged), Skull Bomb (kills all enemies and causes damage to vehicles on the screen) and Energy Shakes (which increase your energy meter).

• If, by the end of a level, you have rescued an Aerosmith member, you will be awarded a Wing. Obtaining all five Wings throughout the game enables you to see the complete ending.

LEVEL 1: CLUB X, LOS ANGELES, NOVEMBER 11, 1996

You begin the level flying beside a NON helicopter. Shoot the chopper to score points before arriving at Club X. When you arrive on the roof of Club X, blast a CD into the green glass roof windows to quickly grab the gold CDs inside. Proceed by shooting the NON Boys that appear all over the place. You can make a NON Boy fall off the roof by shooting them in the lower region of their body. You will then glide down to a brick wall in front of the club. Shoot the cat for extra points. Bust the SkateTrooper that comes through the wall with a CD.



After passing through the fence, you will be given the option of going Left, Right, or In. Going Left or Right brings you over to the corresponding sides of the building to shoot more NON Boys before entering Club X. "In" brings you directly inside to the ticket windows. Shoot the SkateTrooper and the NON Boys. Then you can go either Left or Right to enter the lounge area of the club.

Shoot the phone on the wall and it will spill out coins before you go through the doors into the lounge area Inside the lounge, free the cage

REVOLUTIO

Everything you need to know to save Aerosmith and co

i n

which you party with the band at the end. To rescue a member of the band, wait until they transform into a pair of gold Wings, then shoot the Wings. At the end of a stage, Wings also multiply the player's score (ie. 5 Wings x 1,111,111 total stage points = 5,555,555 points total!).

• Cameras throughout the stages try to "zone in" on you. If they are not destroyed before they flash red, additional enemies will appear in that stage at various areas. If you destroy the cameras before they spot you, you'll be able to avoid additional enemies in that area. Quickly shoot them or use a CD to blow them away!

d a n c e r s

(hostages) by shooting at the locks on the sides of the cage. You'll know you have destroyed a lock on the cage when you see a flash and hear a "boom" sound. An easy way to do this is to shoot the lock (with the gun) until it starts flashing, then peg it with a CD. As you go through the aisles, shoot each table with a CD to prevent a NON Boy from taking easy shots at you.

You then enter the stage area, where Aerosmith is performing. NON Boys pop up from behind the seats to shoot at you. If you shoot the first seat in a row, it will flash and you will start down that row. One CD will destroy all the seats in that row and prevent more NON Boys from popping up from behind that row again When you reach the stage area, if you haven't destroyed the tank, it will pull in again, shooting at you. Take out the NON Boys, gun turrets, and missile launchers first. If you defeat the vehicle, you'll see Aerosmith being abducted by some NON Boys. Helga pops in and says "Stop this nonsense now—if you don't want to deal with me!" You

n CALLING

quer Midway's latest coin-op shoot 'em up BY ERIC HOLMA

then climb a rope ladder to the catwalk where you fight your way into Aerosmith's dressing room. Shoot some more NON Boys and try to destroy everything in the room before the tape plays for more damage points. Steven Tyler will tell you that they have been abducted, and that you must rescue them.

STEVEN TYLER: "If you're watching this then they've taken over. It's up to you now. Find our car and stop the New Order." He gives you the keys to his car. "Remember, Music is the Weapon." You then blast three more NON boys and exit through the roof.

BOSSES

ARMORED TANK: Take out the NON Boys, turrets and missile launchers first. Use the Skull Bomb behind the wooden panel on the right side of the entrance of Club X. You must shoot the wooden panel with a CD to reveal the Skull Bomb. Then shoot the missile launcher in the center with a few CDs to destroy it. If you don't finish off the armored tank before it exits the screen at the beginning, shoot the gold columns with a couple of CDs in front of the stage when it reappears. It will fall and have the same effect as a Skull Bomb and will give you one final chance to finish it off.

SECRETS

PRIVATE NON BOY DANCE PARTY: Shoot the cat on the wall until it dies and access a secret area. When you shoot the cat, it will quickly gain speed and change directions, so it's good to have one player on both sides of the fence to bounce the cat back and forth. When the game prompts you to either go Left, Right, or In, choose Right. Look for a closed window on the second floor of the club. Shatter the closed window to crash the private NON Boy dance party! Shoot the door in the background to go through and enter a bathroom to score a few more points. (It doesn't matter if you go to the correct bathroom to rescue Tom Hamilton at this point because you still need to enter through the main entrance of the club to get him.)

TROG: To see one of the Cavemen from the Pac-Man-esque retro game Trog, you must destroy the black cat. Once the cat is toast, you'll notice a palm tree behind the brick wall. Quickly blast the palm tree with a CD. If you are successful, Trog will pop out of the tree and waddle his way across the brick wall. He will gain speed back and forth like the cat. If you shoot him a certain amount of times, you will have access to yet another hidden area in the game....

TIPS

• Shoot the boarded windows with your gun to soften them up, then launch a CD to destroy them. Chances are, you'll find goodies behind them. After going through the fence, you'll see one of these panels on the upper right part of the building at the entrance. Wait until the armored vehicle moves partly across the screen. When about a quarter of the vehicle is revealed, hit the boarded-up window with a CD to reveal a Skull Bomb. Shooting the Bomb will just about decimate the vehicle. Shoot the lid of the missile launcher located in the lower-center of the armored tank to finish it off.

• Shoot the Club-X signs with your gun until they blow up and you'll receive 5,000 points. After doing this, shoot the blown-up sign with a CD and you will receive an additional 25,000 points!

• When you enter the club, there will be three ticket windows in the background. A NON Boy will pop out behind each window and shoot at you. Shoot each NON Boy with your machine gun through the bottom half of the window to kill them. They will burst through the top half of the window and break the glass, giving you 25,000 points. Normally you would only get a meager 500 points for breaking the glass.

BAND MEMBER #1: TOM HAMILTON

To rescue your first member of Aerosmith, you must visit the correct bathroom in Club X in the

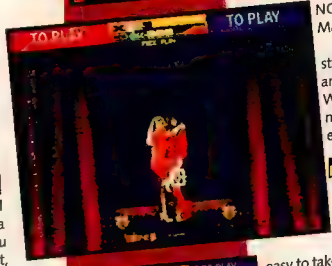
beginning. To determine which bathroom Tom will be in (Men's or Women's), make a note of which direction (Left or Right) you go when you are on the roof of Club X at the very beginning of the game. If you go to the right side of the rooftop, choose Right when it asks you which direction to go at the ticket window of the club; vice versa if you go left. After choosing the correct direction, you will see a figure of a man or woman for the restroom on the wall above the telephones. Quickly shoot this sign, and you'll enter the chosen restroom. Again, shoot everything you see. In one of the stalls, you'll find Tom taking a leak. Shoot him to get a Wing. You then leave the bathroom the way you came in and enter the lounge.

MORE ADVICE

• When in the restrooms, shoot the rolls of toilet paper with your gun. The roll will bounce in the air; shoot them again to earn 10,000 points. The same can be done with the little ring that pops out of the hand-dryer when you shoot it. Repetitive shots on the ring "juggles" it in the air and awards you additional points with each hit (ie. 1,000 for the first hit, 2,000 for the second, etc.)

• In the bar area, you will walk left and right through it, then down the side aisles. In the aisles, you will see a guitar on the ceiling flash. If you shoot it, you'll go back to the other side of the bar; if not, you'll continue forward.

• The lava lamps in the Club X bar contain powerups! Those in the front hold shields, the ones in back each hold two gold CDs.



BAND MEMBER #2: STEVEN TYLER

Wait until you are almost near the back end of the bar. In the middle area, you'll see a gold mirror below two stuffed marlins. You need to shoot each marlin with a CD first, then shatter the gold mirror. The trick will not work if you are at the very back of the lounge! If you are successful, you will enter a dark room behind the mirror. NON Boys will appear out of the darkness and begin shooting at you. Look to the right of your screen and you'll see something glowing in the darkness. It's a light switch—shoot it and the lights come on revealing a rope ladder. After shooting the NON Boys you'll go up and face a curtain which will part to reveal Steven Tyler making out with a fine babe! Shoot him to get a Wing.

LEVEL 2: FLYING THE NEW ORDER NATION CHOPPER

In this level, you start out by stealing a NON helicopter to get you to Aerosmith's car. At the beginning of the level, shoot the boxes at the bottom of the screen and load up on CDs. Most of the level involves flying by buildings and shooting at the helicopter when it comes into view. Various NON Boys shoot at you from windows and rooftops. Just nail the 'copter whenever you see it, break as many windows as possible to reveal powerups, shoot the trees and load up on CDs for the final showdown at the end of the level.

BOSS

NON HELICOPTER: Shoot the missile launchers and machine guns first, then pick and choose. The chopper is much easier to kill when you're not getting pelted.

NEXT THREE STAGES

You can take the next three stages in any order, but you should visit the Pacific Rim stage first. This way, you can load up on CDs and stuff from the boxes in the warehouse.

LEVEL 3: PACIFIC RIM

Brad Whitford: "Destroy KemmyTech—it's a front for the New Order!"

You are in the KemmyTech, Inc. (KTI) factory/warehouse. You must navigate the crate maze, then proceed up to the main office, where you will confront a YellowJacket with a fully armed Transforming desk. At the beginning, shoot the billboard in front of you to reveal a few crates behind it. The top or bottom middle crate contains a Super Gun. After going through the first doorway, destroy the entire computer and cameras to avoid additional NON Ninjas and NON Boys in the Crate Maze.

When you get past the maze and start heading upwards, shoot the columns and platforms with CDs to reveal extra CDs. When you reach the top, finish off the numerous NON Ninjas and NON Boys and enter the manager's office.

BOSS

TRANSFORMER. The whole boss consists of three missile launchers, two machine guns, and a few armored segments. Take out the machine guns first (this makes it easy to take out the missiles without getting hit). Only one missile launcher opens at a time—simply shoot all the missiles inside of it before they launch. Stephen Tyler will say "You da man!" if you are successful. When you hear this, you can damage the other missile launchers while they're still closed. Be sure to break the windows behind the boss for added damage points.

SECRETS

THE MAP ROOM

• Shoot through "Gate 9" and there will be 9 crates. Shoot ALL the crates and they will disappear, revealing a wall with a map of the stage on it.

BAND MEMBER #3: BRAD WHITFORD

Continue through the stage until you get to Gate 6. Select Right to get to Gate 7. To the right of Gate 7 there are three boxes. Shoot the top box once to reveal a sign, then shoot the sign. An arrow will drop down. Quickly shoot the arrow to go right. You will go down a passage to blow up oncoming forklifts. Brad Whitford will be playing a guitar in the last fork-

lift. Shoot him to get the Wing.

LEVEL 4: AMAZON

Joe Perry: "These guys are maggots, they're putting chemicals in all our food!"

You start off this level by crossing a bridge and entering the jungle. Shoot the cameras at the front entrance. In the dense jungle of the Amazon, NON Natives pop out of bushes and trees and throw spears at you. Watch out! In multi-player games, one player should just concentrate on picking off the flying spears. From the jungle you will see a few temples, where you have to waste more NON Boys to get to the food laboratory area. When entering the main temple, you will be confronted by bartender tossing grenades at you! You must shoot the bars holding up the sign above him. Completely dropping the sign down on him allows you to progress down the hall to destroy more NON Boys. You will then confront a Green Slime Skull mid-boss that will bounce eye-balls at you. Fend off the eyeballs and blast CDs at the Skull. You may choose to go either Left or Right to wipe out yet a few more NON Enemies before entering the processing area. Upon enter-ing the processing area, you'll find EverDrones car-rying boxes and using machinery to process "Clown Foods." Shooting "Clown Foods" boxes and blasting the walls with CDs will reveal extra CDs. At the end of the level, a second Slime Skull will pop out of a pool of goo; destroy this Skull the same way you did the first one.

Next, a giant centipede with an attitude will jump out of the wall and into the pool, where it will follow you until you are out of the Amazon complex. The centipede can be damaged when it strikes at you; you'll know when it is about to strike when it rattles—blast it with a CD to destroy it.

BOSSES

BARTENDER: Shoot the sign above him until it falls on him (Shoot the bars holding it up).

SLIME SKULL: Peg him in the face with CDs and shoot the eyeballs until he drops.

CENTIPEDE: As soon as you back out of the very front gate, start shooting at the first two bridge posts you see. If you do it right, the 'pede will come through the door just as you destroy the second post, and will fall down with the bridge.

SECRETS

BUG TEMPLE: When you enter the outskirts of the city, you "scan" up and down a building with many holes in it. If you destroy all the holes with the red eyes in them, the door in the center will open and you'll enter a secret area full of hostages and CDs.

EVERDRONE MACHINE: In the Laboratory, there's a machine that transforms the women into EverDrones. Pummel the machine with CDs until it blows apart, and you'll reach another secret room. Make sure to shoot ALL components of the machine before you move away.

THE ELEVATOR: Look for an elevator button behind the first appearance of the Green Slime Skull. Quickly shooting the button will allow you to ride up to the second and third floors. On the third floor are a few hostages and the entrance to find Joe Perry. On the second floor, shoot the soda machine until you see a purple diamond. This diamond will allow you to access a few hid-den rooms of hostages CDs. After you exit the elevator and return to the first floor, either side of the elevator has pas-sageways with a little bug head above them, marked "Sector 2" and "Sector 3." Shoot the first bug head above the archway to go down the hall and be sure to shoot the second bug head at the end of the passageway to access the hid-den rooms.

BAND MEMBER #4: JOE PERRY

On the 3rd floor, shoot the grate with a couple of CDs until it blasts open. You will travel through the opening and will see Joe Perry blazing on his guitar across the sky. Shoot him to earn his Wing.

LEVEL 5: MIDDLE EAST

Joey Kramer: "Stop the New Order bus!"

This whole level consists of trying to destroy the bus before it reaches the Youth Camp. There are two buttons at the top of the screen, "Speed Up" and "Speed Down." Take it slow, as it will take longer to get to the camp, giving you more time, and the bus will slow down by itself if it gets ahead of you. If you see the signs for the Youth Camp and you still haven't destroyed the bus, you'd better pour it on, because you don't have much time left!

BOSS

MAGIC SCHOOL BUS: You must hit every part of the bus to destroy it (even the window frames and bars). With two or more players, one person should take care of the "Speed Down" button while the other handles

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CD ROM GEFFEN

ON CD ROM!

Produced by Norman Bell & Jasmine Multimedia

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Up." If the bus goes off the screen to the right of you, "Speed Up"; vice versa if it goes left.

SECRETS

RESCUING THE BABES: Shoot the tip of the sledge hammers that the ladies are using to smash the guitars. You must shoot the tip of the hammer when it hits the guitar to free the hostages. Also, search among the monitors for a few derelict *MKII* machines!

BAND MEMBER #5: JOEY KRAMER

In the background there are three Sphinxes. Shoot their noses with CDs. The mouth will drop down revealing a Gold CD and giving you 10,000 points. Be sure to get the Gold CD from all three Sphinxes. Joey Kramer will appear shortly after the third Sphinx (when the meter gets between the "G" and the "O"). The screen will automatically stop and allow you to pick up Joey Kramer near the truck (which is from the Pump album cover).

THE FINAL STAGE: WEMBLEY STADIUM

Tom Hamilton: "Tear down the wall!"

Aerosmith plays Wembley! On stage is a wall of TVs, and a line of your favorite NON baddies to keep you occupied. It takes two CDs to destroy a TV. Helga will occasionally pop up on a TV to taunt you; blast the monitor when she appears on it and you'll get a gold CD. It's a good idea to "prime" each television set with one CD and then wait until her head pops onto a screen to destroy it.

BOSS

HELGA: Even with three people playing, Helga's tough to gun down. Your best method of attack is to first blast her back with a couple of CDs. When she reaches the far end of the stage, allow her to cartwheel in front of the throne by merely shooting her with your gun. When she is lined up against the throne, blast her back onto the throne. When she sits down, she will transform into Mondor!

MONDOR: Grab the various power ups that appear in the crates and keep shooting. Go for the chest and head area; anything else is secondary. Beat him, and you win!

THE ENDINGS

When you toast Mondor, the machine announces: "Congratulations! You have defeated the New Order! The Youth all around the world are free to pursue their pleasures! You will go down in history as the ones who started the Revolution!"

- Close But Not Quite ending

"But...you will not be known as the ones who partied with Aerosmith! Why? Because you didn't find all of the members of Aerosmith hidden throughout the game!"

- Very Cool Complete ending

"Now...it's time to get the real party started! Midway presents, the world's greatest rock n' roll band, Aerosmith!"

You get to see Aerosmith perform on stage, then you move behind the stage area and into a hallway. Time to get those Mammy Awards! There will be some sitting on the ground, but most of them are revealed by shooting columns, the ceiling, the walls, everything! These add up to literally millions of points alone, so snag as many as you can!

Special thanks to the dozens of Internet users and the staff at Midway (especially George Petro, Mark Turmell and Roger Sharpe) for their assistance in compiling this article.

MORE KILLER ARCADE TIPS, TRICKS AND SECRETS!!

PRIMAL RAGE: SECRET VOLLEYBALL GAME!

How about a game of human volleyball? Get a friend and play a two-player game. When one person does a multi-hit combo (it can be a simple one), a worshipper will enter the fighting area. Hit them, and they'll fly into the air. The other player should hit the worshipper before they hit the ground, which will knock them back toward player one. Keep this up for 10 hits, and a referee will bring out a volleyball net—and you'll play a game of volleyball! When one player reaches three points, the game returns to normal and fighting resumes.

CRUIS'N USA: HIDDEN STUFF!

At the car select screen, hold down either view buttons 1 or 2 to completely change the cars. One will turn into a green Jeep with a license plate that reads "GUILTY," another car becomes a yellow school bus (possibly the one from *Revolution X*?), and a third is a police cruiser (complete with "OINK" vanity plate). Select 'em and drive 'em. Also, when choosing your track, hold down different combinations of view buttons to select secret tracks like Golden Gate Park and Indiana.

DARKSTALKERS: PROTECT YOURSELF

When your character is thrown, press down Strong or Fierce for a "soft landing." You'll take less damage from the throw and be in a better position to counter-attack. This works on all throws that do not require more than one joystick motion to execute.

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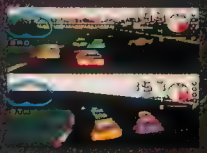

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If you look up the word "mutant" in the dictionary and find that the definition reads something along the lines of "major accident," then you aren't reading Marvel. In the Marvel Universe, "mutant" —as in anything even vaguely *X-Men* related— means "money," as in 50 million *X-Men* books sold per year, as in over 1,500 licensing spin-offs from Cyclops lunch boxes to chromium Wolverine cards, as in the first public trading ever of comic company stock on Wall Street.

From an industry standpoint, the list of *X-Men* superlatives goes on and on, those mutant genes churning out new super heroes and dollar signs so fast that laid end to end they'd stretch from your local comic shop all the way to Hollywood, where "mutant" also means the number one rated Saturday morning 'toon two years running, not to mention a planned "major motion picture," three words that really get studio exec's drooling when you put them in the same sentence with "X-Men."

Actually, "major accident" might not be a bad explanation after all for the amount of money that swirls the *X-Men* empire. When Stan Lee sat down with Jack Kirby over coffee in 1963 to toss around ideas for Marvel Comics' next superhero team, they probably couldn't imagine they'd come up with the biggest concept of the

Are You

an X-ceedingly X-tensive and X-traordinary

perienced?

X-cursion into the X-otic world of the X-Men

by Gary Dauphin

TIM & GREG HILDEBRANDT

last 30 years. The story of the X-Men's origins as a franchise is as follows: Marty Goodman, Marvel's publisher at the time, wanted another title to slot into Marvel's growing universe and gave the assignment to his top two creators, Lee and Kirby. The pair weren't quite legends yet, but between them they had just hit a series of home runs—*Spider-Man*, *The Avengers*, *The Fantastic Four*, *The Incredible Hulk*, as well as most of the other Sixties-era titles that make up the heart of Marvel's early "big bang." If the fact that those would be tough acts to follow wasn't pressure enough, Stan and Jack had to contend with the added problem of being, well, tired.

In published interviews about the genesis of the X-books, Lee never fails to mention that by that point in his career (and remember, he'd been doing comics since the Fifties), between coming up with heroes or a new set of villains every other month or so, he was running out of ideas for characters. But an assignment was an assignment, and he and Kirby got to work on the new book anyway, mulling over possible explanations for the new team's superpowers. After shooting blanks for a while, the pair decided they'd try to sell Goodwin on a comic book about genetic mutants. Besides getting them off the hook as far as a new set of origins was concerned, they also figured the mutant idea would sell. Spidey and the Hulk were mutants in a way, their genes changed by radiation, but there was also the bigger picture of the Cold War looming over most of what happened in American pop culture during those years. Marvel liked to keep their books current, and at the time "current" didn't just mean satellites and death rays, but the threat of Russian missiles and the ghoulish ritual of grade schoolers practicing weekly "duck and cover" drills, where kids were taught to hide from nuclear fallout by jumping under their desks. Mutants made a certain kind of sick sense.

Goodwin liked the general idea, but there was one problem. He hated Lee's original suggestion for a title, "The Mutants."

"Noboby will get it," Goodwin decided, and then he picked a title

CONTINUED ON PAGE 96

BLOODLINES:

Think you're an X-Men X-pert? Well, if you don't already know that Luna is Magneto's granddaughter, or that Mariko Yashida was once engaged to Wolverine, then you've got some studying to do. Read on—and learn the genetic history of your favorite mutants!

BY CHRIS GOLDEN

The law of genetics isn't hard to grasp. If your hair is blond, chances are that one, or both, of your parents is blond too. It's all in the genes, baby. So due very simply to the fact that mutant powers are an inherited trait, a genetic legacy, many of the characters within the **X**-Men universe are, in fact, related to one another.

So what we've got here are the major players in the **X**-universe (along with some pretty obscure ones) who are related to one another by blood or by law.

CORSAIR—Christopher Summers. Leader of the Starjammers, a band of interstellar pirates. Father of Havok and Cyclops.

- **HAVOK**—Alex Summers. Son of Corsair. Leader of X-Factor, a government-sanctioned mutant team.
- **CYCLOPS**—Scott Summers. Son of Corsair and husband of Phoenix. Father of Phoenix (II) and Cable. Leader of X-Men's "blue" team.
- **PHOENIX**—Jean Grey Summers. Wife of Cyclops, mother of Phoenix (II). Formerly known as Marvel Girl. One of the five original X-Men.
- **PHOENIX (II)**—Rachel Summers. Daughter of Cyclops and Phoenix from alternate future. Former member of X-Men and Excalibur.
- **GOBLYN QUEEN**—Madelyne Pryor Summers. Former wife of Cyclops, mother of Cable. Clone of Phoenix. Dead.
- **STRYFE**—Son of Cyclops and the Goblyn Queen. Clone of Nathan Christopher Summers (Nathan Dayspring Askani'son, aka Cable).
- **CABLE**—Nathan Christopher Summers (aka Nathan Dayspring Askani'son). Son of Cyclops and the Goblyn Queen. Father of Tyler. Leader of X-Force.
- **TYLER**—aka Tolliver. Son of Cable.

CANNONBALL—Samuel Guthrie. Brother of Husk. Former member of New Mutants. Field leader of X-Force.

HUSK—Paige Guthrie. Sister of Cannonball. Member of Generation X.

BLACK TOM CASSIDY—Cousin of Banshee. Villainous mutant.

BANSHEE—Sean Cassidy. Cousin of Black Tom Cassidy, father of Siryn. Former agent of Interpol, former member of X-Men. Currently headmaster of Generation X.

- **SIRYN**—Theresa Rourke Cassidy. Daughter of Banshee. Current member of X-Force.

WARPATH—James Proudstar. Brother of Thunderbird. Former member of Hellions. Current member of X-Force.

THUNDERBIRD—John Proudstar. Brother of Warpath. Former member of X-Men. Dead.

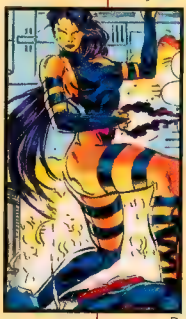
COLOSSUS—Peter Rasputin. Brother of Magik and Mikhail Rasputin. Member of Acolytes. Former member of X-Men.

MAGIK—Illyana Rasputin. Sister of Colossus and Mikhail Rasputin. Former member of New Mutants. Dead.

MIKHAIL RASPUTIN—Brother of Colossus and Magik. Former leader of Morlocks. Apparently dead.

THE X-Men FAMILY Tree

JUGGERNAUT—Cain Marko. Half-brother of Professor Charles Xavier.
PROFESSOR X—Charles Xavier. Half-brother of Juggernaut, father of Legion. Founder and leader of X-men and de facto leader of several other mutant teams.
• **LEGION**—David Haller. Son of Professor X and Dr. Gabrielle Haller. Temporary member of X-Men. Incredibly powerful psi with multiple personality disorder.



SABRETOOTH—Victor Creed. Father of Graydon Creed. Former member of Marauders.
MYSTIQUE—Raven Darkholme. Mother of Graydon Creed and Nightcrawler, foster mother of Rogue. Former leader of Freedom Force.
• **GRAYDON CREED**—Son of Sabretooth and Mystique, half-brother of Nightcrawler, foster brother of Rogue. Member of Upstarts.
• **ROGUE**—(real name unknown) Foster daughter of Mystique. Foster sister of Graydon Creed and Nightcrawler. Member of X-Men.
• **NIGHTCRAWLER**—Kurt Wagner. Son of Mystique. Half brother of Graydon Creed, foster brother of Rogue. Former member of X-Men. Member of Excalibur.
• **DAYTRIPPER**—Amanda Sefton. Foster sister of Nightcrawler. Member of Excalibur.

BISHOP—Brother of Shard. Former member of XSE. Member of X-Men.
SHARD—Sister of Bishop. Former member of XSE. Apparently dead.

GENERAL COY—Uncle of Karma. Great grandfather of Xi'an. Crimelord on island of Madripoor. Leader of X-Men 2099.
• **KARMA**—Xi'an Coy Manh. Distant cousin of Xi'an, niece of General Coy. Former member of New Mutants.
• **XI'AN**—Great grandson of General Coy, distant cousin of Karma. Leader of X-Men 2099.

LONGSHOT—Father of Shatterstar. Former member of X-Men. Currently residing in Mojoworld with Dazzler.
• **SHATTERSTAR**—Son of Longshot. Member of X-Force.

BRITTANIC—Brian Braddock. Formerly known as Captain Britain. Brother of Psylocke and Jamie Braddock. Member of Excalibur.
PSYLOCKE—Elizabeth (Betsy) Braddock. Sister of Brittanic and Jamie Braddock. Member of X-Men.
JAMIE BRADDOCK—Brother of Brittanic and Psylocke. Powerful but insane mutant.

MAGNETO—Erik Magnus Lensherr. Father of Quicksilver and the Scarlet Witch, grandfather of Luna. Former leader of Brotherhood Of Evil Mutants.
• **SCARLET WITCH**—Wanda Maximov. Daughter of Magneto, sister of Quicksilver, ex-wife of The Avengers' Vision. Former member of Brotherhood Of Evil Mutants. Former member of Avengers. Member of Force Works.
• **QUICKSILVER**—Pietro Maximov. Son of Magneto, brother of Scarlet Witch, husband of Crystal, father of Luna. Former member of Avengers. Former member of X-Factor. Former member of Brotherhood Of Evil Mutants.
• **CRYSTAL**—Wife of Quicksilver, mother of Luna. Member of race of Inhumans. Former member of Fantastic Four. Member of Avengers.
• **LUNA**—Daughter of Quicksilver and Crystal. Granddaughter of Magneto.

FERAL—Maria Callasantos. Sister of Thornn. Former member of Morlocks. Former member of X-Force. Current member of Mutant Liberation Front.
THORNN—Lucia Callasantos. Sister of Feral. Former member of Morlocks.

WHITE ROOK—Emmanuel DaCosta. Father of Reignfire. Former White Rook Of The Hellfire Club Dead.
• **REIGNFIRE**—Roberto DaCosta (aka Sunspot). Former member of New Mutants. Former member of X-Force. Leader of Mutant Liberation Front.

MOIRA MACTAGGERT—Mother of Proteus, foster mother of Wolfsbane. World's leading researcher in mutant genetics.
• **MUTANT X**—Kevin MacTaggert. Son of Moira MacTaggert. Became joined with Gilbert Benson (Piecemeal) to become creature known as Proteus. Dead.
• **WOLFSBANE**—Rahne Sinclair. Foster daughter of Moira MacTaggert. Member of X-Factor. Former member of New Mutants.

POLARIS—Lorna Dane. Sister of Zaladane. Former member of X-Men. Member of X-Factor.
ZALADANE—Zala Dane. Sister of Polaris. Villainous mutant.

SUNFIRE—Shiro Yashida. Cousin of Silver Samurai and Marika Yashida. Former member of X-Men.
SILVER SAMURAI—Kenuicho Harada. Cousin of Sunfire and Mariko Yashida. Criminal mutant.
MARIKO YASHIDA—Cousin of Sunfire and Silver Samurai. Once engaged to Wolverine. Dead.

UNUS—Angelo Unuscione (aka Gunther Bain). Father of Unuscione. Dead (killed by his own power).
• **UNUSCIONE**—Complete name unknown. Daughter of Unus. Member of Acolytes.

BLACK KING—Sebastian Shaw. Father of Shinobi Shaw. Former Black King Of The Hellfire Club. Dead.
• **SHINOBI SHAW**—Member of the Upstarts who took over the Hellfire Club by killing the Black King, his father.

X-RATED

THE ALL-TIME LAMEST MUTANTS IN THE X-UNIVERSE

BY CHRIS GOLDEN

Face it. The early days of the X-Men had more lame characters than the current cast of Saturday Night Live. The Locust. El Tigre. The Vanisher. Lucifer. Mechano. Computo. Maha Yogi. It's almost too painful to go on. With such a repulsive box of bones in the ol' closet, we've decided to single out the seven absolute lames mutants in the *X-Men* universe.

Truly the worst of the worst.

BLACK TOM CASSIDY

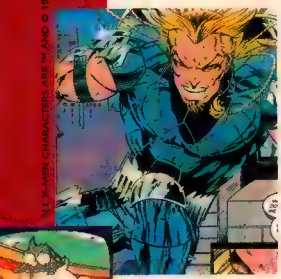
Black Tom's mutant power is that he's friends with Juggernaut, who hauls his ass out of trouble on a daily basis. And, even more pathetically, Tom was recently infected with a virus that had him turning into a tree. A tree! Can you say l-o-s-e-r?

BRITTANIC

Before he became Captain Britain, Brian Braddock was a dead ringer for Steve Sanders from *Beverly Hills, 90210* A good-looking, well-build, exceedingly rich—but not very bright—guy with blond hair. After becoming Britain, he was thrown into a time/space flux and experienced all future possibilities. Now he's come back just as dumb, only more confused. And the storyline of his change has been completely ignored. Why? Simple: he's useless.

XTREME

He looks like Shatterstar (but even prettier) and fights like Shatterstar, which pretty much goes to show how lame Xtreme is. His power is interesting, but limited (he can electrify your blood, but only if you're bleeding first!). And let's be honest. It's got to be the worst name in the history of comics.



BLOB

Fred Dukes' mutant power is that he's so damn fat, nobody can move him. He just sits there, gaining weight with each breath. In most places, that would qualify him for instant hospitalization! "He's not that fast, kids...just go around him!"

FOREARM

A member of the Mutant Liberation Front, this guy has four arms. Get it? Four arms? Heh-heh. Somebody take him out back and put a bullet in his head! Forearm sucks.

FIRESTAR

Okay, trivia: How many characters had the power to control fire in the Marvel Universe before Firestar? One? Two? Three? More like ten gazillion! A knock-off if ever there was one. Add to that Firestar's truly boring costume, and you've got a loser with a capital L. But that's not all. Firestar was originally created for a lame *Spider-Man* animated TV series so that she and Iceman (fire and ice, get it?) could be the "Spider-Friends." Puke.

STONEWALL/ SUPER SABRE/ CRIMSON COMMANDO

While this is actually a team of three different characters, it really doesn't matter—they're all equally lame. Stonewall was a guy nobody could move (same concept as Blob, only Blob was fat), Crimson Commando was...well...a good fighter. And Super Sabre, he ran real fast. How original. He's dead now—and we couldn't be happier.

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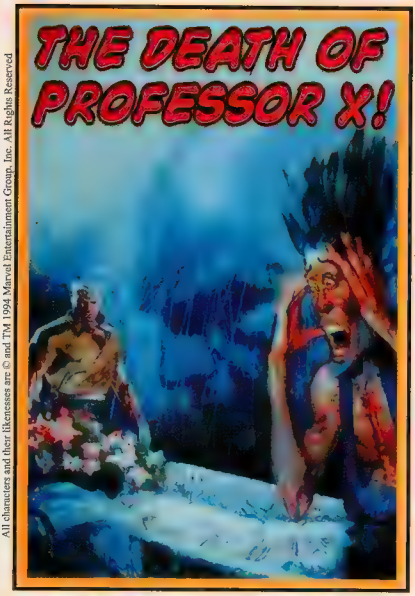

X-MEN

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Flux Dream Team, PART 2

The Villains

It's the best of the worst. Once again, FLUX has assembled the ultimate comic book Dream Team—but this time, it's the bad guys. Imagine if we matched them up against those, sweet nice superheroes from Iusse #1. OH, WHAT A WAR IT WOULD BE...

By Chris Golden

TEAM EYESORE

VIOLATOR

First of all, Violator's a wiseass—something every team needs. In human form, he is a short, dumpy balding guy with a big grin. When you take away that tattoo on his face, he could easily pass for a sweaty drunk at an insurance convention. His attitude and ego, combined with his ability to, um, stretch the truth in his favor, carries over from his goofy little human disguise into his huge, voracious, slavering demon identity. He can teleport and has all kinds of dark, magical powers—not to mention plenty of

TEAM STRATEGIST

LORD PUMPKIN

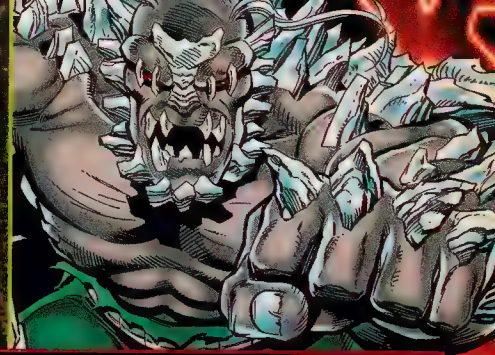
He's got a pumpkin for a head. Not exactly an original idea, but one that works really well for this Ultraverse villain. Twisted into an evil grimace that would be virtually impossible to carve out of a Halloween pumpkin, the face of Lord Pumpkin—or "the Pump," as he is also known—is one of the most disturbing in comics. With his spindly, scarecrow-like body and savage-looking metallic claws, Lord Pumpkin is definitely the source of many a pre-teen nightmare. Also take into consideration that sickly green glow which emanates from his eyes (and can also be blasted from his mouth like dragon fire), and you can understand why he's the coolest new villain to come along in quite a while.

contacts in hell. But let's take into consideration the most important aspect of Violator's evil...he's one ugly sonofabitch. If you saw a giant, slightly spider-like nine foot demon with huge burning eyes in a back alley, you'd wish you had a change of undies. And plenty of other superheroes would, too.

TEAM LEADER

MAGNETO

Without question, Marvel's mutant master of magnetism would have to be the leader of this squad. In his time, he has headed many groups of villains, and even a group of heroes at one point. More importantly, however, his is ego—and he who has the largest ego is*a*lways the leader! His messianic complex is matched only by the extraordinary power he wields. His magnetic control is precise enough to affect the iron in a single human body, but it can be all-encompassing enough to alter the movement of the tides or the polarization of the Earth. Though he is rarely portrayed as such, Magneto may be one of the single most powerful characters in comics.



TEAM KILLING MACHINE

DOOMSDAY

Remember The Terminator? Reese explains to Sarah Connor that the thing can't be killed, that he'll keep coming and coming and coming until she is dead. "That's what he does," Reese says. "That's all he does!" It's a chilling moment of realization for Sarah, and as such, Doomsday is an equally chilling character. With the sharp, cutting bones that protrude from his skin and his unparalleled strength, Doomsday is little more than a savage, unstoppable killing machine. He marched halfway around the world to achieve one seemingly impossible goal, the death of Superman. Any villain that can kill Superman, at least temporarily, ought to strike fear in the hearts of all normal beings—and any hero with half a brain.

TEAM BRANIAC

HARADA

So far, our Dream Team of villains has a pair of demonic beings, a living bulldozer (Doomsday) and the ultimate bad guy (Magneto). But there is still the possibility that the team will run into heroes it can't handle. After all, remember what Professor X did to Magneto! So here's where Valiant's Harada comes in handy. Sure, he's not much at first glance: a distinguished-looking, middle-aged Japanese guy in an expensive suit. Maybe if you own a large entertainment company the sight of Harada could send you running from the room in fear, but in general, he's not all that intimidating. But we need him for his mind. Harada is one of the most powerful telekinetics and telepaths in the world of comics. And it doesn't hurt that he's an extraordinarily wealthy man with an elaborate international power base.

THE MAIN EVENT

With Ash, comic book art tandem Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti prepare for the ultimate battle.

by Rob Samsel photo by Harry Heleotis

IN THE WORLD OF COMIC ART, JOE QUESADA AND JIMMY PALMIOTTI ARE HOT—REAL HOT. Their work on such titles as *Ninjak*, *X-O Manowar* and *Vengeance Of Vampirella* have earned these two gifted hands from New York City tremendous notoriety in a field dominated by mediocrity.

Now, with the formation of Event Comics, the dynamite duo of Quesada/Palmiotti jumps headlong into the cut-throat world of self-publishing. Their first title, *Ash*, is currently available in comic shops across the country.

But Quesada and Palmiotti enter the publishing game with some apprehension, realizing it's no cakewalk fighting for shelf space against dominant companies like Image, Marvel and DC. And while the casual observer might view the formation of Event Comics as a direct assault on other companies. Not so.

"This little company is no threat to anyone," says Palmiotti. "Especially Image. In fact, the guys who started that company are our role models."

"The motivation behind this company is purely one of fear," adds Quesada.

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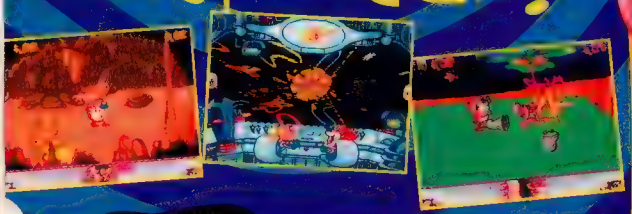

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DeTh MeTaL

As heavy metal continues its downward spiral, will Megadeth survive and thrive or merely rust in peace? Bassist David Ellefson responds

interview by Don KaYe photo by Jeffrey Weiss/Angles

Just when you thought that this whole alternative thing was gonna swamp the music scene in whiny, angst-ridden bitterness, some of speed metal's hardiest veterans, like Slayer and Testament, are taking a stand. Included in that esteemed group is Megadeth, whose sixth album, *Youthanasia* (Capitol), finds the California quartet continuing to streamline their sound while retaining the double-crunch guitars of Dave Mustaine and Marty Friedman.

If *Youthanasia* is not as frenetic and angry as previous Megadeth recordings, it may be a sign of stability in this long-troubled band. The current lineup of Mustaine (who also handles the snarling, scratchy vocals), Friedman, bassist David Ellefson and drummer Nick Menza has stayed consistent for five years, and Mustaine's well-documented struggles with drugs are seemingly behind him for good. But does better living and band harmony make for great music or could Megadeth just rust in peace? FLUX hooks up with David Ellefson in London to learn about the life of Deth.

FLUX: With all the business now attached to making and promoting a record, how do you nurture the original inspiration you had to just play music?

DAVID ELLEFSON: You know, we haven't gotten together as a band and played music in a couple of months, since we recorded the basic tracks for the record. And to me, when the four of us get together, strap on our guitars and play music, that's when it all comes back to me like, "Oh yeah, that's right, this is the whole reason we started doing this in the first place!" To me, the actual playing of the music is the fun part. Doing concert tours, that to me is a blast. Anytime I've got an instrument in my hands and

I'm playing, that's when I feel like I'm truly in my element.

FLUX: How did *Youthanasia* come together?

ELLEFSON: In the fall of '93, we began trying to figure where we were gonna record it. We kicked back and forth the idea of recording in L.A., which would have been the simplest thing to do, or attempt to build a studio in a house in Phoenix. [*Producer*] Max Norman was really gung-ho on that idea, and he got us all really psyched into doing it and feeling confident that it could be done. But recording in a house couldn't be worked out, so we ended up leasing a warehouse in downtown Phoenix, and actually constructed the room from scratch. It was great. We had our own studio, didn't have to worry about who was down the hall recording, didn't have to worry about a receptionist knocking on the door, sending messages to us—all those little distractions that go on in a studio. It was nice to be in our own element.

FLUX: A lot of the songs on *Youthanasia* stay in one groove most of the time. Is that because the band felt it took its earlier, more complex style, as far as it could go?

ELLEFSON: Yeah, I think there's no disputing the fact that, in Megadeth, we're all players, and we are masters of our own instruments. We proved that on our first few albums. But more and more, it's like we just want to learn how to be better songwriters. At this point, it's less about being self-indulgent and more about writing great songs.

FLUX: The album's lyrics also seem to be the most personal Megadeth has written.

ELLEFSON: Well, we've never been afraid to talk about whatever is on our minds. And looking back over all the Megadeth albums, there's a lot of different subjects we've written about. It just so happens that a lot of the songs on this album happen to be more about us. I think that, because they're more personal, a lot more people will be able to relate to them. They'll read something or hear something in there and go, "Oh, yeah, the same thing happened to me," or "I feel like that as well." So I think we've gotten much more down to the core of it, in terms of relating to human feelings.

FLUX: Was there any temptation to write about any of the social/political issues you've touched on in the past?

ELLEFSON: We've had so many lyrics that have been politically based in the past, especially on *Countdown To Extinction*. I mean, that record came out the year of the presidential election, plus we participated in the Rock The Vote thing, and Dave was involved in MTV's coverage of the election—the whole thing tied together beautifully on that record. But at this point, it's kind of "been there, done that." Just about the time that people think they're onto what we're doing, it's nice to turn the corner on them. It keeps us from being predictable.

DENIS O'REGAN

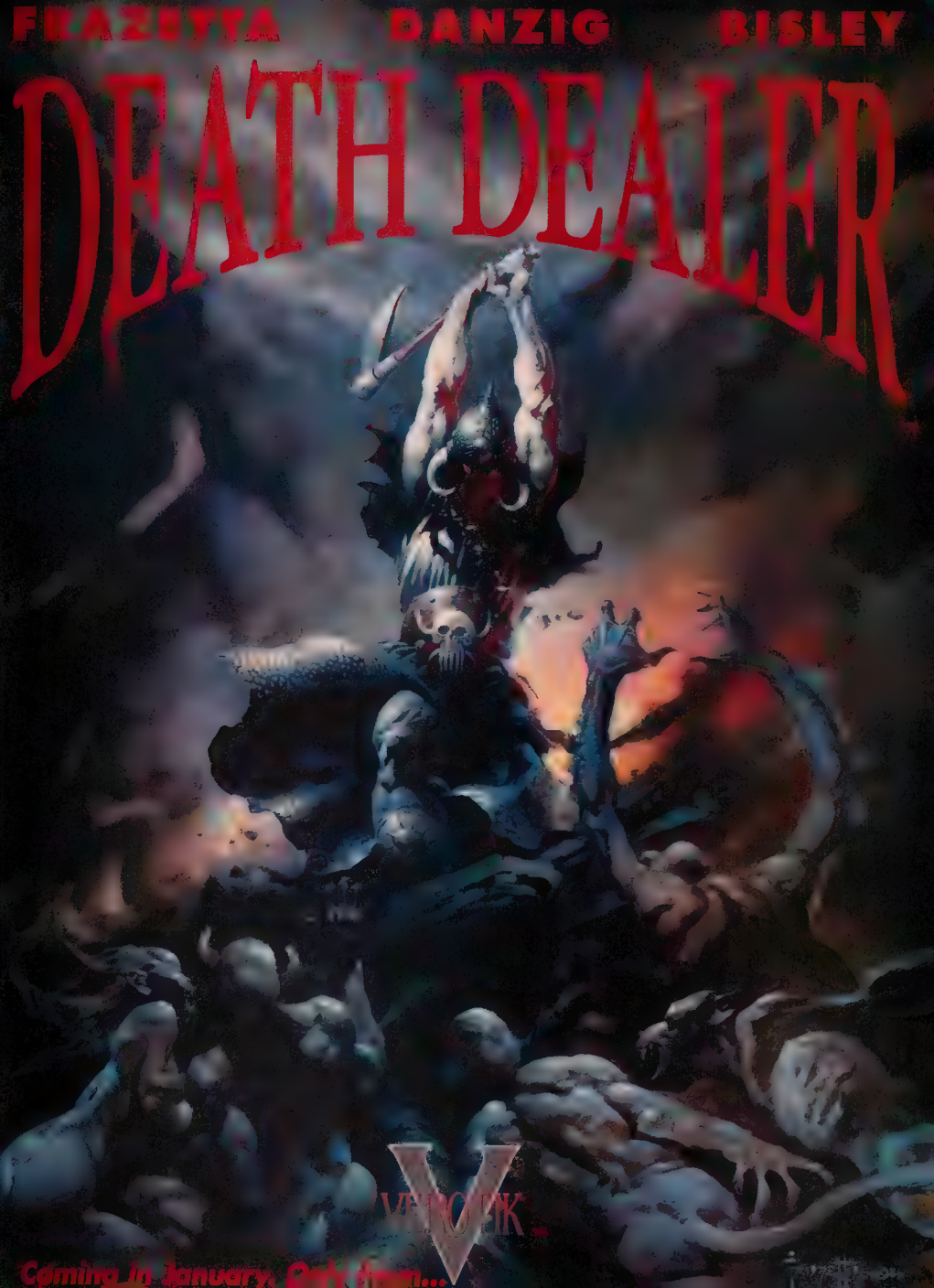
FLUX: A lot of bands from the Eighties aren't around anymore. Do you cherish the fact that you're still around, still mean a lot to a large audience, and have been able to survive the constant turmoil and changes of the music business?

ELLEFSON: Yeah, I remember when we first signed with Capitol. I walked in and was like, "My god, these people have a life, a job, they work with music." I was envious. But here we are, we've been signed to the label for seven or eight years, and there's been like three administrations that have gone through that label. We've been with Capitol longer than anybody that works here, from the president all the way down to the guy that parks the cars! Now it's like, *we're* the ones that have a life! I wake up every day and I'm just glad to be here, 'cause it is the music business, and nobody has any right to be here. It is a privilege, not a right. But on the other hand, we've done the things that are necessary to maintain some longevity. And one of those is that we haven't been a trend-oriented band, and we've still got the same beliefs and integrity that we had when we first got together back in 1983. Not wavering from what we wanted to do since day one is what's kept us here all this time.

FLUX: With all the changes in musical styles these days, does Megadeth still fly the flag for metal?

ELLEFSON: Well, let's face it, heavy metal pretty much sucks these days! It definitely isn't cool like it was when I was growing up. Back then, we had bands like Sabbath and Judas Priest—bands that really had a vibe going. And they didn't claim to be anything else but heavy metal. Now, everyone's either too ashamed to admit that they play heavy metal, or they're always trying to be something else. Personally, I think it's great that we haven't had a record out for the last two years because now we've opened the floodgates and let all the crappy music go through. And the good ones are gonna be around, the good bands of the alternative era—but all the other crap is gonna fall by the wayside. And to me, what the world needs right now is a good Megadeth record!

"I think there's no disputing the fact that, in Megadeth, we're all players, and masters of our own instruments."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GAME REVIEWS

ROAD RASH

3DO (Electronic Arts)

Road rashers rejoice! *Road Rash*, the classic motorcycle racing/combat game that was such a rush on the Genesis, has now made the jump to the 32-bit 3DO system—and could very well be not only the best 3DO game on the market, but (get ready for this) possibly the best racing game in video game history! Yes, this game is so freakin' good it's downright scary.

Climb aboard your high-powered superbike and hit speeds of 140+ mph while you hug tight corners, climb steep hills, avoid oncoming traffic and pedestrians, avoid the fuzz and occasionally whack another racer over the head with a club until he becomes road pizza. Weave through congested city streets or go for broke on an open countryside road. Fight for position and finish high enough to win cash—then go to the bike shop and upgrade to an even faster, meaner model. The action is non-stop, and it's the kind of game that'll have you sweatin' with excitement and adrenaline long before you see the checkered flag.

"Yeah, but that's exactly what it was like on the Genesis—what's so good about the 3DO version?" you're asking yourself. And you're right—partially. The game play of *Road Rash* 3DO is almost identical to what it used to be. However, the graphics have been so drastically upgraded that you'd think you were racing in a postcard. The detail, the textures, the shading, the backgrounds, the perspective—the whole damn thing is truly breathtaking (to look at, and to play). 3DO value just skyrocketed.

RICHARD De..ARATO

GRIDDERS

3DO (Tetragon)

For those 3DOowners who dig brain-teasing puzzle games and aren't into sports, fighting, racing, platform, shooter or anything else besides puzzle games, *Gridders* might just be

what you need to spice up your 3DO library.

The hero of *Gridders* is a 20-year-old boy named Zack. The start of the game finds Zack, the last human worker in a futuristic factory hell-bent on total automation, finally given his walking papers. He is told that there is some terrible secret down in the depths of the factory, and his quest is to unlock this great mystery. An interesting story, but one that really plays no key role in the actual gameplay.

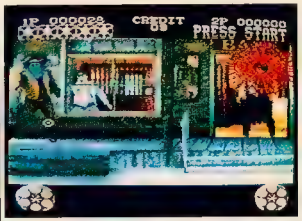
The idea behind *Gridders* is to guide Zack (and his bionic dog) along a giant grid made up of 256 squares while large blocks ("gridders") move past him in all directions. Zack must find the keys and solve various puzzles to safely escape one level and reach the next. To do this, Zack must use certain gridders to perform certain functions, while at the same time avoiding the ones that'll crush him and his pooch like grapes. The right gridders will drop keys and other useful items that Zack will need to progress to the next level. It's a bit more complicated than that, but you get the gist.

Sound boring? For those looking to blow something up or decapitate an enemy, it may very well be. But *Gridders* does have its strong points, including a refreshing style of gameplay with a unique perspective, nice 3D effects, solid graphics and top-notch character movement. It may not be for everyone, but for those looking for a challenge that doesn't require a quick trigger finger, *Gridders* delivers. —CHIP BRADLEY

LETHAL ENFORCERS II: GUN FIGHTERS

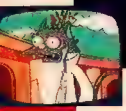
Sega CD (Konami)

If any game on the market truly brings out the dark and evil side of video gamers, its *Lethal Enforcers*. Konami's all-too-realistic shoot 'em up, now in its second installment, will make you



learn something about yourself that you might find genuinely scary: that, after a few rounds, you'll come to realize that there's really nothing finer than standing in your living room, hand wrapped tightly around that big "Justifier" gun, and shooting the digitized gunfighters that suddenly appear on your TV screen. It's violent as all hell (there's nothing implied here—you aim and kill, that's it), but it's also one of the most exhilarating video game experiences available.

Compared to the original home version of *Lethal Enforcers*, *Lethal Enforcers II: Gun Fighters*, is pretty much the same thing in a new Western package (just like the arcade version). Only slight differences exist, including superior



gun control and much more challenging bosses. The graphics are of essentially the same quality as before, and are perfectly suitable for a game of this nature. Once again, there's no stage select as in the arcade, but the levels themselves are easier (advancement is a breeze, enabling you to see more of the game sooner), and at least you don't have to repeat a level just for killing a few innocent bystanders, as you did in the original.

So drop your joysticks, pick up that Justifier, and get a copy of *Lethal Enforcers II: Gun Fighters*. Killing was never so much fun. —ALEX RICO

WHO SHOT JOHNNY ROCK?

Sega CD (American Laser Games)

It's games like *Who Shot Johnny Rock?* that make you look at your Sega CD and wonder why you ever bought it. After showing the world how *not* to make a CD game with the abysmal *Mad Dog McCree*, American Laser Games return with *Who Shot Johnny Rock?*,

their new Western whodunit.

Unfortunately, the same problems that plagued *Mad Dog* have returned to bury *Johnny Rock*, the worst of which is horrific video quality (the game uses full-motion video of live actors, and the quality is so bad that most of the time you're dead before you have any idea what's going on—not to mention the fact that the voice and picture of whoever is speaking rarely match up). As you watch the movie unfold, you wait for someone to pull out a gun, then you blast 'em. And while this sounds cool, the truth is that it's a drag. All it takes is one viewing to memorize who the bad guys are, and you're always ready for them next time around. It make for very repetitive game play.

The game is compatible with the Sega Menacer, Konami Justifier or ALG's new Game Gun—but our perfectly good Justifer was rendered inoperable with this game, and we were forced to use the standard joystick. Suffice it to say, it was a sucky experience. And we're willing to bet it's not much better with a gun. Lame.

—BILLY MALONE

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT

Genesis (Sony Imagesoft)

With hockey season in the toilet for the time being, the best place to find that rock 'em sock 'em hockey action we rink rats so desperately crave this time of year is right on your Genesis, as proven by EA's marvelous *NHL '95*. Unfortunately, though, the same cannot be said about *ESPN National Hockey Night*, Sony Imagesoft's new addition to the frozen floor forum.

While there have been far worse hockey carts than this, what ultimately drags *ESPN Hockey* into the penalty box are the little things. For example, the grade school Casio keyboard sounds, which are better suited for a circus than

a hockey game, are truly pathetic. Add to that the fact that the crowd in *ESPN* responds maybe once every five minutes, and you've got one terrible-sounding game. As for the visuals, the players skate with realism and fluidity and lend at least a slight air of authenticity to the game.

The controls are solid, the action quick and the hitting hard, the way hockey should be. But while slamming opposing players into the boards is always a cheap thrill (and very easy to accomplish in this game), it leaves room for far too many penalties to be called. And being able to take out just about any player on the ice also makes scoring (for either side) extremely difficult. Count on low-scoring games.

Other problems with *ESPN National Hockey* include the limited view of the ice (making it nearly impossible to find your teammates), the lack of goalie control and the lack of a replay feature (both of which would have made more sense than the "Fastest Man" and shooting practice options that are included). And even though the bad outweighs the good, *ESPN* is, believe it or not, a solid 16-bit hockey game—but it sure ain't no *NHL '95*.

—BILLY MALONE

ZERO THE KAMIKAZE SQUIRREL

Genesis (Sunsoft)

Cute-hero platform hoppers—even the fun ones—have traditionally lacked that little something intimate. Sonic has the admittedly cool spin dash-and-trash, and even Mario has a certain attitude once he's able to fire projectiles, but with *Zero The Kamikaze Squirrel* you can walk right up to your opponents and personally kick the living shit out of them. Zero, a kind of buck-toothed Jackie Chan, is on a mission for some-vaguely-environmental-cause-or-other and spends his time making cool Bruce-Lee

howls—*waaaaa!*—pumping enemies full of *shuriken*, searching for secret doors (you have to inflate them first with pumps, as any idiot knows), weapons and strength power-ups, and—this one will really freak you out the first time you see it—suddenly finding himself in cannon-scope crosshairs, dodging gunfire which appears to be coming from *your* side of the TV. Nothing astoundingly new here, but style points can make the difference between a fun game and a dumb one, and *Zero* scores big in that often overlooked area. —STRAFE

SYNDICATE

Genesis (Electronic Arts)

What the hell happened? When we last left the massive PC hit *Syndicate* (pictured below), its addictive combination of strategy and bloodshed was gaining more and more critical praise and turning gamers into overnight addicts. But now that it's on the Genesis, *Syndicate* merely sucks.

In *Syndicate*, players control one of three countries (not your own customized corporation, as the PC version offered) intent on taking over the world with its genetically-engineered organized crime mob. Build cyborg mafiosos, have R&D whip up fun new machine guns and rocket launchers in the lab back home, and send your robots out to kill the other guy's robots. Successfully complete a mission in a country and that country is yours to control—you'll have to worry about taxes and revolution as the game progresses and you amass more territory. If your

mission fails, it's back to the drawing board (or back to your last password save).

The PC version featured detailed but tiny graphics and a steep learning curve before the game became enjoyable. The Genesis version is all that and less: less detail, less accessible gameplay, less enjoyable. Blocky little sprites wander

around on the 3/4-view urban playfield; only tiny colored caps show the difference between your agents, enemy agents and hapless civilians. There's a radar to follow, but good luck decoding it—it's positively teeny-weeny. Some missions require you to enter the buildings and assassinate or persuade someone (with the coolest weapon in the game, the Persuadertron, which turns anyone it touches into a mindless, following sheep); as you might expect, blindly navigating inside unknown structures isn't exactly easy or fun. Many commands must be administered through multiple button taps; six-button support would have been appreciated. The main menu screen, where you can upgrade your agents' body parts, give them new weapons and pick a new country to attack, features itty-bitty, apocryphal icons that are guaranteed to confuse.

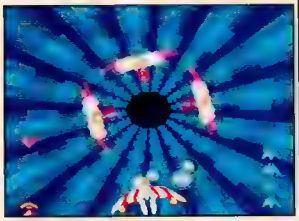
Thankfully, a training mode is included, but you'll have to log in a few hours before the game becomes playable. Corners always have to be cut when moving PC hits to 16-bit gaming platforms, but with a complex title like *Syndicate*, there aren't any spare parts—everything's necessary. For all the effort required to conquer this chopped-up *Syndicate*, you might as well buy the original, unadulterated computer version and at least enjoy the experience. Mission failed.

—DAN AMRICH

THE LAWNMOWER MAN

Genesis (Time Warner Interactive)

You hated the movie, now hate the game! *The Lawnmower Man* comes to Genesis—and really, it's only a few *years* after the film and



SNES versions appeared—and it's almost a direct port from the T•HQ SNES gamepak. Only problem is, that version wasn't all that good to begin with, and SNES-designed games don't tend to get better when they're downgraded and dumped on the Genesis.

Following its film counterpart, *The Lawnmower Man* puts players in the role of Dr. Angelo, chasing cyberpsycho Jobe through both real life (I think) and a computer network, hacking and cracking all the way, in an attempt to stop him from taking over the world. Or something like that. It's not really explained, and it doesn't really matter. You'll glimpse a few digitized stills from the film

(yes, that's what those blurry splotches of color are) but they won't help you figure anything out.

The film had no plot but great graphics; the game doesn't even have that. The platform sequences are not as crisp as those in the SNES version and the sprites are very small; lots of tiny projectiles can knock Angelo off his feet without the player seeing them coming. The overhyped first-person virtual reality sequences look like they were downloaded straight from an old Intellivision game—they're blocky and unimaginatively colored. An interesting effect, but it sucks.

On the other hand, the controls are a hair tighter than before, the VR sequences move faster than those in the SNES version and they're more forgiving (you can actually continue on if you slam into a wall, unlike in the SNES cart where you simply die). The most noble thing about *The Lawnmower Man* is its attempt to string lots of little games into a cohesive whole—puzzles, action sequences and reflex tests are all mixed together into one cart. But the key word here is *attempt*; add up a lot of lame little games and you still get a lame big one.

If you're a diehard fan of the film, rent this cart for a weekend. You'll probably be impressed by the smooth, fast VR segments, then you'll be frustrated and confused by everything *but* the VR segments, then you'll be bored with everything, *including* the VR segments.

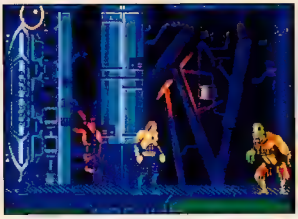
—DAN AMRICH

GENERATIONS LOST

Genesis (Time Warner Interactive)

If you're going to steal, steal from quality sources. This was obviously the thinking over at TWI when they began pilfering other carts in order to make *Generations Lost*. Combining the gameplay style, look and feel of *X-Men* and the intrigue, sound and movement of *Flashback* (not to mention the fantasy storyline commonly found in any RPG), TWI has come up with a solid action/platform game in *Generations Lost*.

With large, detailed characters and well-drawn backgrounds, *Generations Lost* is a pleasure to look at. As for the gameplay, however,



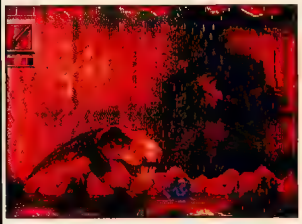
it's a frustrating experience to say the least. The levels are huge, and continue points are few and far between. Combine that with enemies that are hard to kill and controls that are shaky enough to have you slipping off ledges and falling into chasms more than you'd like, and you have one difficult game. And that's just the basic action—wait 'til you're faced with brain-bending puzzles and seemingly impossible situations. But it is this lofty level of difficulty and challenge that makes *Generations Lost* rank high above the average platform contest. Not quite *Flashback* or *Out Of This World*, but a winner nonetheless.

—RICHARD DeLARATO

JURASSIC PARK II: RAMPAGE EDITION

Genesis (Sega)

Ch-ching! ch-ching! That's the sound of Sega trying to cash in on the recent home video release of *Jurassic Park* with yet another *JP* video game,



Jurassic Park II: Rampage Edition. It's probably the first time in history that a video game sequel was released years before the actual movie sequel. And, judging from the half-assed effort that obviously went into the making of *Rampage Edition*, Sega should have waited at least until shooting began on the inevitable sequel to Spielberg's dinos-gone-awry blockbuster.

Once again, as in the first Genesis version of *Jurassic Park*, you can play either as Dr. Grant or the Raptor. You have the same weapons, moves and attacks as before, and the same twitchy controls with which to guide your character. And luckily, for those who yearn for the same gaming experience they had a year ago, there's the usual bevy of slashing, spitting, ramming dinosaurs, just as they appeared in the original. Nothing new, you ask? Damn right.

If anything, *Rampage Edition* is even as good as its predecessor. The graphics are far more weak (very two-dimensional, with pale-looking dinosaurs that have no detail). And, unlike before, this version of *JP* has no password or save feature (a criminal act, in our estimation).

So, is *Jurassic Park: Rampage Edition* a bad game? Not really. In fact, it does have its moments and offers some decent run-for-your-life-and-shoot-anything-that-moves action. Let's just hope the next *JP* movie is better.

—ALEX RICO

RED ZONE

Genesis (Time Warner Interactive)

Zyrinx, the software development team that programmed last year's underground hit

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Sub-Terrania, has returned with a fresh perspective on helicopter assault games, *Red Zone*. Unfortunately, that perspective is literally apt to make you vomit.

The game's plot is straightforward and full of testosterone: shoot everything. You and your missile-stocked 'copter have 24 hours to bring down an evil dictator before he starts a nuclear war. Complete a mission, get a password. Occasionally, you'll get to hop out of your chopper and take out the baddies on foot.

Red Zone's two-color cinematic intro is one of the best and most effective to date—with only red and black to manipulate on screen, the images of an evil dictator and his massive toys of war are film-quality smooth and extra menacing. The music fits the desperate mood, full of brooding synths and military-style drums.

Control, on the other hand, is a nightmare; as difficult as *Sub-Terrania* was to learn, *Red Zone*'s even tougher. The player perspective is from overhead; the ground scrolls freely in 360 degrees below your chopper. That's majorly disorienting, and some gamers will be nauseous in seconds flat. In addition to the dizzying viewpoint, enemies have a tendency to suddenly appear on screen; if you can't aim and shoot immediately, you're toast. Firing the wrong weapon at an adversary will give them time to nail you and clip your bird's wings. If you're not destroyed outright, your vehicle will lose stability and start flying in circles, which in turn puts the ground into a *major* spin cycle. Oh, and if your helicopter goes down, that's it: your game's over. The world's destroyed in a giant red mushroom cloud and you've gotta start all over again. Thank God for passwords.

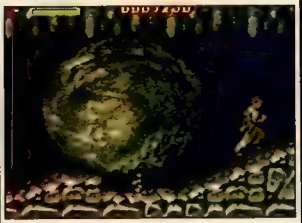
Credit to Zyrinx and TWI, however, for putting out a truly original game; *Red Zone* doesn't copy any other cart on the market, and fresh ideas in video games are few and far between. It's just a shame that such an inventive game is practically impossible to play without feeling queasy. —DAN AMRICH

INDIANA JONES' GREATEST ADVENTURES

SNES (JVC)

Given the stellar track record of the *Super Star Wars* series, most gamers would probably assume that *Indiana Jones' Greatest Adventures* would be great—and thankfully, they won't be disappointed. More than just a terrific license, it's a terrific game that actually lives up to high expectations.

Before designing *Indiana Jones' Greatest Adventures*, LucasArts learned an important lesson from the *Super Star Wars* series: you can only see Tatooine for so many levels before it gets really, really annoying. So, they compressed all three Indy movies into one cart, cutting the fat and leaving nothing but action. Almost every level of *Indiana Jones* features a new background and a new gameplay goal. It's not all just running right and whipping Nazis (though fear not, there's plenty of that). The maze of secret passages in *Temple Of Doom*'s Pankot Palace, for instance, is light on reflexes but heavy on memory skills and clever thinking, while *Raiders*' burning Raven Bar level requires gamers to hop, whip and jump as fast as possible to escape the rising flames. There's some solid Mode 7 stages thrown in too, like the mine cart chase from *Temple Of Doom* and the biplane shootout in *Last Crusade*; they're impressive as always, but sparse.



The graphics are, in a word, fantastic. Indy's sprite is very detailed, multi-scrolling foregrounds and backgrounds appear on practically every level, and the digitized images from the films are the best ever programmed into a SNES cart. John Williams' music sounds note-perfect and the sampled sound effects of cracking whips and gunfire are very good—except for Indy's voice, which is muffled and scratchy. Controlling Indy's bullwhip remains tricky throughout the game, no matter what kind of controller you're using, but it's essential to learn in order to win.

Three films, one gamepak, eye-popping visuals and tons of action. What more could you want? Buy it. —BRIAN CARNEGIE

STREET RACER

SNES (Ubi Soft)

Funny thing about *Street Racer*: you never race on the street. Sand dunes, dirt tracks, arenas, grassy knolls, graveyards—never the street. But that's okay; even though *Street Racer* looks like a cutesy *Rock 'N Roll Racing* clone at first glance, it's actually the best Mode 7 racing game to come along since *Super Mario Kart*.

In addition to its eight characters/cars and 20 tracks, *Street Racer* offers three standard racing tournaments (if you can call racing a monocled German in a car/biplane across a graveyard "standard") plus a rumble option (where the victor is the last driver left in the arena) and a soccer game. Yes, soccer—grab the oversized ball, jump your car into the air and aim for the goal. If you like racing games but get bored of going in a circle forever and ever, this cart's for you.

And oh, the Mode 7 effects. Every track is a graphic feast, full of detail (Surf's beach track, for instance, features lapping waves around the edges) and plenty of smooth Mode 7 rotation. The music is bright and catchy throughout, but control is a little confusing; pushing Down on the D-pad makes the car go in reverse, while pressing Up makes it jump. It's manageable, but expect to see your car hopping around pointlessly a lot as a result.

This may be blasphemy, but *Street Racer* actually does *Super Mario Kart* one better in a number of areas—the cars are larger, there are more combat and gameplay options, four players can race simultaneously and the game's got buckets more attitude. But, again, no streets. Whatever. —DAN AMRICH

REN & STIMPY: TIME WARP

SNES (T•HQ)

I'm sorry, but does anyone really care about these two any more? Well, for those who can't live without their Nickelodeon reruns of this most sleazy pair, T•HQ has proudly released *Ren & Stimpy: Time Warp* for the SNES. And, compared to all the other *Ren & Stimpy* games out there, *Time Warp* is probably the most accurate portrayal of the depraved duo.

In fact, it is the look and sound of the game, with near-perfect character animations and sound bytes directly from the show, that are its strongest points. However, the game play is a bit too pedestrian (not to mention slow and repetitive) to give this cart any long-term value. Essentially, it's a walk around, pick up cash and smack big ugly creatures around 'til they drop kind of adventure—and that gets old awfully quick.

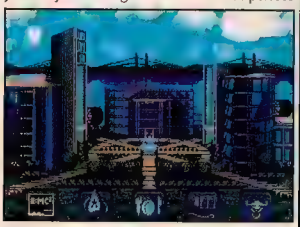
Of all the *Ren & Stimpy* games available, *Time Warp* captures the essence of the show the best. But it's obvious that, by making sure

they included all the trademark *Ren & Stimpy*-isms, the programmers forgot about making a good *game*. --RICHARD DELARATO

STARFLEET ACADEMY STARSHIP BRIDGE SIMULATOR

SNES (Interplay)

Constitution-class starships diving down from two o'clock like Stukas out of the sun? Property-damage raids on nearly defenseless Gorn shipyards? A war of attrition against the Tholian Territorial Annex? What the hell is this? This is *Starfleet Academy*, ladies, gentlemen and other beings, and you'd better stay on your toes because you *are* being graded on this—literally. As a freshman Starfleet Academy cadet working your way towards graduation and that perfect



GPA through a battery of simulations designed to test your abilities in navigation, diplomacy, combat and decision-making.

The real joy of *Starfleet Academy* is the fact that the people who created it clearly did their homework. Long-time Trekkies will recognize simulated situations, including a "Balance Of Terror" combat with a Romulan, a two-on-one Klingon hunt in The Undiscovered Country, and yes, the dreaded Kobayashi Maru scenario. There's even a two-player battle mode for slug-outs between various starship types. When you encounter dialogue from the TV series or one of the films, it's verbatim.

The only drawbacks are that some of the decision-making/mystery elements are perhaps a little easy to figure out (Interplay should have known that Trekkers *want* to be faced with hair-tearing moral crises and world-threatening decisions at every turn). So it's not as cool as it could have been...but it is damned good. And there's always a chance for a sequel. —CHRIS HUDAK

ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

Jaguar (Atari)

Camp Golgotha Colonial Marine Training Base is having just the crappiest day you can imagine. Not only have they opened their air-locks to an alien ship packed with homicidal xenomorphs; not only have the aliens wiped out every marine but one; but *now* their distress call has been answered by another ship packed with...gulp...Predators. In this *DOOM*-style first-person corridor crawler, you can take the role of an Alien out to rescue the Hive Queen, a Predator in the hunt for big game, or the hapless sole human survivor of the massacre, desperately blasting your way through five sub levels and hordes of hostile creatures toward the last remaining escape pod, with the Self-Destruct sequence ticking away.

The motion is smooth, the sound effects eerie, the tension high, and the body count

higher, messy, and...ugh...*yellow*. Forget the extraterrestrial games; they're fun, but the real experience here is to turn off the lights, check the closet (carefully) and play the Marine game, making your way through the dim, hissing corridors, rifling your dead buddies for weapons and watching the edges of the light for the approaching shadows.

"Game over, man, game *over*!"

—STRAFE

IRON SOLDIER

Jaguar (Atari)

While the objectives in this first-person Jaguar battle mech game are a bit fuzzy, it doesn't matter; if a building or an armory or a power plant gets in your way, just waltz up to it in your IS-01C Iron Soldier—a 60 metric ton, 14-meter tall fighting machine a la *Battletech*—and take it out. Pump it full of assault rifle rounds, demolish it with your shoulder-mounted railgun, or even pop off a gratuitous cruise missile at it, personally piloting it right to the front door. Or you can just look down from your four-story vantage point and dance the Funky Chicken all over it if you so desire.

The graphics, motion and gameplay are exquisitely smooth, making you feel like you're really there. If you run out of ammo, no worries—just start slapping the buildings down with your bare metal fists. A few more games this satisfying and gratuitously violent, and the Jaguar platform will be solidly on its paws with the best of them. -STRAFE

CORRECTION

In the last issue of FLUX, we incorrectly identified *Michael Andretti's Indy Car Challenge* as a Genesis game, when in fact it is only available for the SNES. The nice folks at BulletProof Software threatened to shoot us if we didn't come clean.

Stax

TRADING CARD NEWS & NOTES

by Steve Fritz

* Sandman card fans prepare yourselves: SkyBox is coming out with a full Vertigo card set. Vertigo is the home of Morpheus, his sister Death, the Doom Patrol, Animal Man, Shade The Changing Man and a number of other cool comics. This 90-card set will be another oversized set just like the Sandman set, with the main chase card this time being a Death stereogram. All the top Vertigo artists will be contributing, including Jill Thompson, Chris Bacchalo (of *Generation X* comic fame) and more.

* Fleer will be releasing a second set of *Ultra X-Men* cards this Xmas. This 150-card set features work from artists like John Romita Jr., Boris Valejo, Julie Bell and the Brothers Hildebrandt. 28 chase cards will also be made available, including nine Chromium Cards, nine Power Blast Cards and 10 Suspended Animation Cards.

* For all you anime-niacs who can't figure out what the latest hot video from Japan is without a subtitle, Comic Images is coming to your rescue. They'll be releasing a 90-card set entitled *World Of U.S. Manga Corp. Collector* card set, featuring all the top manga and anime characters, like Tank Police, Project A-Ko, Genocyber and more. Look for special autographed cards, chromium cards and even animation cel giveaways.

* Coming from Topps is a fantastic new Star Wars set that features clips from the movie in their original, widescreen state. The *Star Wars Widevision* set offers oversized cards with scenes from the movie uncropped as

they were meant to be viewed. The 120-card set features clips from the entire film.

* Monty Python fans should prepare themselves for a series of Python trading cards coming out this month, compliments of Cornerstone Communications. Coinciding with the 25th Anniversary of Monty Python, this 100-card set features scenes from the *Monty Python's Flying Circus* television show that aired from 1969 to 1974.

COMIC REVIEWS

by Chris Golden

BATMAN: BLOODSTORM

DC

Written by Doug Moench, penciled by Kelley Jones, inked by John Beatty

An "Elseworlds" sequel to *Batman/Dracula: Red Rain* by Moench and Jones, *Bloodstorm* is very well done, but in some ways, still a disappointment. The art is fantastic, the story is captivating, and there's more gore than one might reasonably expect from Batman, even in a story of this nature. Unfortunately, the pluses of this story make it that much easier to spot the minuses. Gordon and Alfred are just a little too blasé about the fact that Batman is now a bloodthirsty creature of the night. And, in general, it seems that there was so much more potential to the concept of Batman as a vampire than is explored here. Was the temptation to use the Joker so overwhelming that something more original was impossible?

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BATMAN: MADNESS

DC

Written by Jeph Loeb, illustrated by Tim Sale

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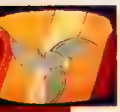
It would be relatively easy to criticise writer Jeph Loeb for using children in jeopardy to turn a lame character like the Mad Hatter into a real and unsettling threat. On second thought, however, since the Hatter's name and origins come from a mythology created for children (*Alice In Wonderland*, dummies), this updating of the character seems most appropriate. And chilling. Add to that Bruce Wayne's childhood memories of the classic *Wonderland* fairy tale and the presence of a young, pre-Batgirl Barbara Gordon, and you've got a winner. Tim Sale's art is perhaps the best of his career, and that's saying quite a bit. The best Batman story of 1994—try to find it if you missed it.



BISHOP #1

Marvel

Written by John Ostrander, penciled by Carlos Pacheco, inked by Cam Smith

Ostrander is one of the best writers in comics, so you know that Bishop's first solo adventure is in good hands. Wisely, Marvel has initially decided to concentrate on Bishop's background as a member of the XSE, a future police force whose job it will one day be to hunt down outlaw mutants. When he originally came through time, with fellow XSE officers Malcolm and Randall, Bishop was chasing the Upstart Fitzroy and his band of rabble. Fitzroy and his followers have all been destroyed, except for Bantam, a teleporter. Or so Bishop thinks. Running from his life, Bantam now informs Bishop that an evil mutant named Mountjoy, sort of a spiritual vampire who absorbs entire people and can ride along in their bodies as a parasite, is also in the present day.

Unlike so many new villains, Mountjoy is indeed a significant threat, an interesting and disturbing character, and a joy to hate. Bishop's obsession with the deaths of Malcolm and Randall is well-portrayed, and the presence of a holographic imager which holds all of the memories and consciousness of his sister, Shard, brings up the question of whether she will eventually come to exist in the X-Men's time. Marvel has promised no more alternate futures etc., but Shard would be a welcome exception (and they could make an argument that she'd been here all along.)

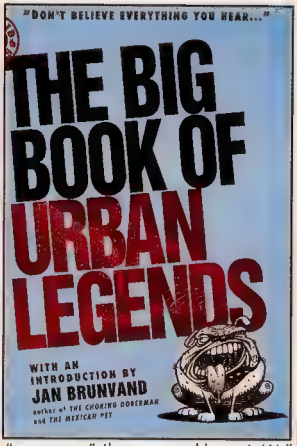
Ostrander, as always, is outstanding, restraining the loftier concerns he works out in titles like DC's *The Spectre* to turn in a superior superhero title. Pacheco and Smith are excellent examples of the fact that Marvel still has wonderful artists in its stable.

THE BIG BOOK OF URBAN LEGENDS

DC/Paradox

Written by Fleming and Boyd, illustrated by various

One of a number of "Factoid Books" coming up from Paradox, *The Big Book Of Urban Legends* is guaranteed to be the most fun. Urban legends are those tales without a grain of truth that take on the ring of truth because they spread like wildfire across the country, and sometimes the world. Stories like "The Hook," "The Mexican Rat-Dog," "The Killer In The Back Seat," "The Mouse In The Coke Bottle" and many, many more. This volume is a 224-page trade paperback filled with stories such as these, and packed with a lot of laughs and more disgusted


"DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU HEAR..."
THE BIG BOOK OF URBAN LEGENDS
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
JAN BRUNVAND
author of THE CHOKING DOBERMAN and THE MEXICAN PET

"eeeewwws" than you could count. Well worth the $12.95 cover price.

'BREED II #1

Malibu/Bravura

Written and illustrated by Jim Starlin

With the money he's getting for his novel/screenplay *Thinning the Predators*, who knows how much longer Starlin will be doing comics? Even if that weren't the case, *'Breed II* is well worth a look. The first mini-series was top quality storytelling. The sequel shows all the promise of the first, but with even more emphasis on government corruption and conspiracy, and some serious hell-raising on the part of human/demon halfbreed Ray Stoner. Starlin's reputation is well-deserved, and he continues to prove it here. Hopefully his big Hollywood break will lead to a film version of *'Breed*.

DUCKMAN: THE MOB FROG SAGA

Topps

Written by Stefan Petrucha, illustrated by Jay Lynch

November will also see the launch of a *Duckman* monthly series, but we got a peek at the first of this three issue mini-series, and guess what? It's insane. If the madness of the cartoon appeals to you, you definitely won't want to miss the comic book. You can almost hear the voice of Jason Alexander popping out of the comic, especially when Duckman introduces his family, a group worthy of a carnival sideshow, e.g. "my eldest, Ajax, could be a poster child for genetic cleansing." Bonus points for the splash page with the "Mob Frog," a giant frog version of Brando as *The Godfather*.

EXTREME JUSTICE #0

DC

Written by Dan Vado, penciled by Marc Campos, inked by Ken Branch

There are a lot of things to like about this book, most especially its reliance on conspiracies within the U.S. government. In addition, the idea of a rogue Justice League is quite appealing, especially one with the attitude that it must police the "official" group. The writing is tight and has just enough humor, and the art is efficient but not spectacular. The book's biggest drawback, however, is the team's lineup. Captain Atom is cool, and Blue Beetle is growing on me, but that is more than outweighed by the fact that the new Amazing Man (God, what a name!) and Booster Gold are goofy, boring and even, in the case of the hated Gold, annoying.

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FRANKENSTEIN #1 & #2

Topps

Written by Etoy Thomas, penciled by Rafael Kayanan, inked by Rick Magyar

The virtues of the bolt-necked, flat-topped Frankenstein monster from so many films notwithstanding, nobody has ever made a film that accurately adapts Mary Shelley's original novel. If the comic book is any indication, it ought to be, the upcoming movie (with DeNiro as the monster) may finally be it. Roy Thomas is a consummate professional, and his script

shows it. The real treat here is the art by *Conan The Adventurer* artist Kayanan,

MARY SHELLEY'S FRANKENSTEIN is ™ © 1994 Topps Comics

who gives us elegance and anguish in ever panel. We can only hope that, once this miniseries is over, Topps picks up where the film leaves off and continues the story of the creations of Frankenstein.

HULK 2099 # 1 & #2

Marvel

Written by Gerard Jones, penciled by Malcolm Davis, inked by Chris Ivy

While the adventures of *Hulk 2099*, a character who bears nothing but Gamma rays in common with the present day Hulk, were fun and interesting in *2099 Unlimited*, it is here in his own monthly title that things really take off. John Eisenhart is a former corporate image maker, a multimedia entertainment producer who found a heart when he got too close to his subjects (and, incidentally, became the Hulk). Now he wants to leave all responsibility behind and head into the desert. One last stop to pick up his severance pay turns everything around for him, however, and death and destruction convince him not to abandon Los Angeles. Kickin' artwork. Problem is, what is *2099 Unlimited* going to do now, since their backups suck? If only all *2099* titles were this good!

INDIANA JONES AND THE IRON PHOENIX #1

Dark Horse

Written by Lee Marrs, illustrated by Leo Duranona

On the one hand, the latest Indy adventure from Dark Horse is perhaps

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closest to the film series in its energy and atmosphere. The humor, the gimmicks, the cavern filled with archaeological treasures and deadly traps are all there. Dave Dorman's wonderful cover painting is perfect. The script and art are both clean and tight. On the other hand, while the movies were loaded with improbable events and coincidences, the pace and the actors carried it off. In *The Last Crusade*, Ford passed for a Nazi by not speaking (much). Here, the quintessential American passes for Russian by speaking quite a bit, in English, and throwing in the word "comrade."

JUDGE DREDD: LEGENDS OF THE LAW #1

DC

Written by John Wagner and Alan Grant, penciled by Brent Anderson, inked by Jimmy Palmiotti

DC put together an impressive team for this, their second monthly *Judge Dredd*

title. The basic difference between the two is that, while *Judge Dredd* is telling high action stories which prepare American audiences for the Sylvester Stallone film on the way, *Legends Of The Law* is much more concerned with the essential Dredd. One of the writers, Wagner, is the co-creator of Dredd, so it comes as no surprise that this story has all the cynical, sarcastic humor of the original British version and top-notch art. In a sense, because *Legends* will appeal to more mature readers, the two books might have been split up another way, between DC and Vertigo. Unfortunately, the publisher chose not to go that route. Chances are, this comic will be much more true to the original Dredd character than a Stallone flick could ever hope to be.

LA PACIFICA #1

DC/Paradox Press

Written by Amos Poe and Joel Rose, illustrated by Tayyar Ozkan

DC's imprint, Piranha Press, never seemed to get off the ground. It's impossible to tell whether Paradox will fare better, but if *La Pacifica* is any indication, the quality of their material will not be the reason they fail. The writing is crisp and the art grim, with just enough realism to be disturbing. It is the tale of a man whose life is torn apart by the rampage of a gun-toting maniac, who is then killed. The victim then feels that before he can go on with his life, he must find out what motivated his attacker in the first place, must understand why he exploded. What a movie this would make!

THE MACHINE #1

Dark Horse

Written by John Arcudi, illustrated by Ted Naifeh

Avram Roman is a man on the run. Well, perhaps "man" is not quite the word we're searching for. He is certainly no longer human. With a hard-drive for a brain and wired for ass-kickin', the machine is being hunted by the federal government (who want to cover up what they did to him by killing him), by gangsters (from whom he is protecting a wounded cop) and by cops (who think he's a cop killer). When Dark Horse debuted its Comics' Greatest World last year, *X*, *Ghost* and *The Machine* seemed to be the standout characters. While we have to wait until '95 for *Ghost*, we can satisfy ourselves with this strong urban tale from Arcudi and Naifeh.

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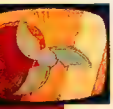


MEGADETH

YOUTHANASIA

FEATURING "TRAIN OF CONSEQUENCES"

ROGUE #1

Marvel

Written by Howard Mackie, penciled by Mark Wieringo, inked by Austin

Picking up where the Gambit miniseries left off, we find Rogue trying to resolve several issues in her life so that she can follow through on her feelings for the ragin' Cajun. First on her list is the pain she has felt ever since she sent her first love, Cody, into a coma; second are the problems which arise from having to siphon Belladonna's memory. But Belladonna pushes her way to the top of the list when, in a search for vengeance on Rogue and Gambit, she begins her attack on Rogue by going after Cody. A valuable addition to the story of the X-Men and the romance of the two popular characters. Unfortunately, Wieringo, while a talented artist, is completely wrong for this project. Rogue and Belladonna are about as sexy as Marvel's women get; Wieringo can do button-nose-cute, but is lost when it comes to sexiness.

SIN CITY: THE BABE WORE RED, AND OTHER STORIES #1

Dark Horse/Legend

Written and illustrated by Frank Miller

Miller's *Sin City* tales are consistently some of the best in comics. More than other books, its quality relies on the perfect synthesis of art and story. One could not work nearly as well without the other. Of the three stories reprinted here, two are short, lean and mean. The title story, serialized in Diamond's *Previews*, is longer and a bit more forgiving. Though the ending is slightly predictable, it works nevertheless. Dark, gritty and utterly unlike anything else in comics today, *Sin City* is always a winner. For the novel equivalent of the type of stories told by Miller, check out the fiction of Andrew Vachss. A collaboration between the two men would be more than welcome.

TEAM SEVEN #1

Image

Written by Chuck Dixon, penciled by Aron Wiesenfeld, inked by Trevor Scott

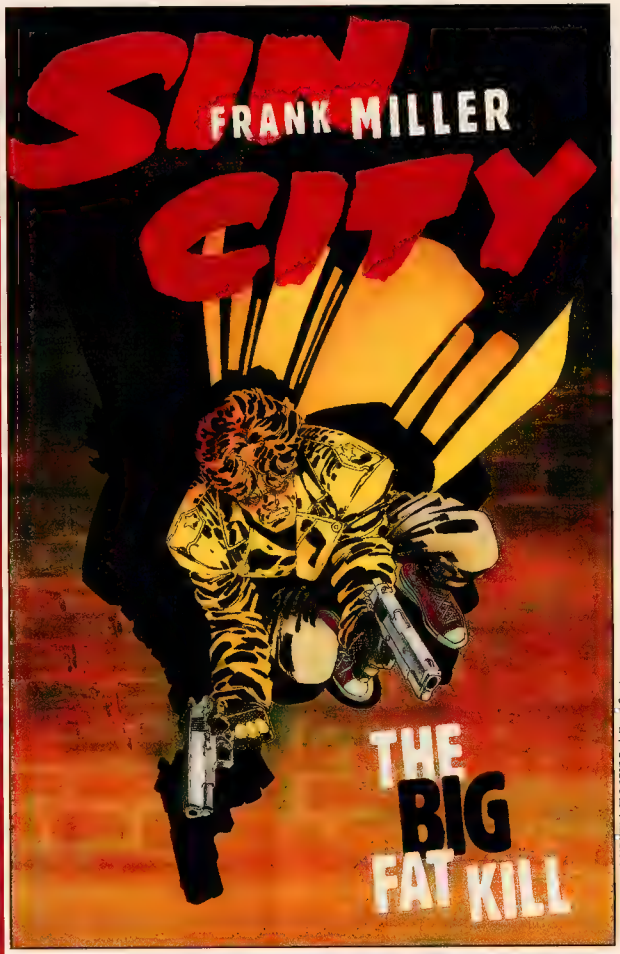
One of the things that Image lacks (through no fault of their own) is history. *Team Seven* supplies readers with backstory for a number of *Wildstorm* titles, including *WildC.A.T.s*, *Stormwatch*, *Gen13* and *Wetworks*. We get to see the events which established the relationships between Deathblow, Grifter and Backlash, among others. The story is good, with typically adept action from Chuck Dixon, but its real value is in providing this history. Wiesenfeld's art is impressive. His ability to combine the Image style with scenes of war which seem almost antiquated in comparison is admirable.

SIN CITY: THE BIG FAT KILL #1

Dark Horse

Written and illustrated by Frank Miller

Dwight, the star of *A Dame To Kill For*, is back for a new *Sin City* miniseries—and back in trouble. Dwight is at his new girlfriend Shellie's apartment when her abusive ex shows up. Dwight chases him off in style, but decides he can't let them wreak havoc anywhere else, despite the fact that *he's* a wanted man and in danger of being arrested if identified. The story returns us to Sin City's "old town," which is run by very dangerous women who are ready to give Shellie's ex a lesson he'll never forget. But if Miller's track record has taught us anything, it's that there's always more happening than meets the eye.



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RECORD REVIEWS

THE BLACK CROWES

Amorica (American)

You know that electric shaver commercial where they say, "It shaves as close as a blade?" How stupid is that? They're trying to sell me an electric shaver, but they're acknowledging that the blade is the standard by which all shavers, including theirs, are measured. So what would be the point of getting something that only approximates the standard when you can just get the standard itself?

On *Amorica*, their third album, I still feel like The Black Crowes are trying to convince me that they shave as close as a blade. The flavor's a little more funky and daring this time out, there are more cowbells and Latin percussion and stuff, but I still don't get a sense that this band is about anything other than grave-robbing the music of decades gone by (or, for that matter, plundering their own catalog—the closing opus, "Descending" is a blatant knock-off of "She Talks To Angels").

Like The Black Crowes' previous two albums, *Amorica* reminds us what was so great about the Faces and *Exile On Main Street*-era Stones. But, also like its two predecessors, *Amorica* fails to show us what is so great about The Black Crowes.

—JOHN REYNOLDS

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Nativity In Black—A Tribute To Black Sabbath (Columbia)

Hot on the heels of the *Kiss My Ass* Kiss tribute album comes *Nativity In Black—A Tribute To Black Sabbath*. But where the Kiss collection suffered from the appearance of a bunch of lame bands like Extreme, Toad The Wet Sprocket and the Lemonheads, *Nativity In Black* boils over with such modern-day metal masters as Megadeth, Sepultura, White Zombie and Biohazard. The result is an appropriately crushing testament to metal's founding fathers.

However, *Nativity In Black* is not all fire and brimstone. While tracks like "After Forever" (Biohazard), "Lord Of This World" (Corrosion Of Conformity) and "NIB" (Ugly Kid Joe) are strong replicas of the originals, others—like Megadeth's "Paranoid," Therapy?'s "Iron Man" (featuring an obviously bored Ozzy Osbourne on lead vocals), Sepultura's uninspired "Symptom Of The Universe" and

that way-old live version of "War Pigs" by Faith No More—fail miserably. Hits and misses aside, *Nativity In Black* is a fitting tribute from metal's new breed of bands—all of whom recognize the fact that they wouldn't exist had it not been for Black Sabbath. —ROBERT CONTE

JOHN FRUSCIANTE

John Frusciante (American Recordings)

Phase one: The listener knits his brow and says, "Uh...What the hell is this crap?"

Phase two: The listener considers that, in order for this guy to have been in a band as mega as the Chili Peppers, he must possess at least one iota of talent and/or cool-

ness. Guilt and self-doubt set in as the listener starts to think that maybe there is some deeper, hidden meaning in this flake-fest of Neanderthal guitar noodling and senseless caterwauling.

Phase three: The listener feels stupid for giving this nonsense a second thought and becomes Dave Navarro's biggest fan.

—JOHN REYNOLDS

MERCYFUL FATE

Time (Metal Blade)

"Minutes and seconds are passing us by," King Diamond sings on "Time," the title track from Mercyful Fate's brand-new release. But listening to this album (the

fourth from the seminal gothic-metal band), it seems that time is standing still. The high pitched operatic yowls, the grade-B horror film inspired lyrics (witches, demons, etc.), the evil minor-key based guitar riffs, the galloping rhythms, the speedy sounds-like-Yngwie solos—they're all here as they've always been and probably always will be on any album by King Diamond or Mercyful Fate. If you haven't tired of King's standard shtick, then pick this up. Otherwise, don't waste your *Time*.

—MORDECHAI KLEIDERMACHER

RANCID

Let's Go (Epitaph)

Why can't they all be this good? Fast, loud, snotty punk is back and Rancid knows how to do it right. Try this: strap yourself to a chair with rope and tape, then have a bud put this CD on. By the third song, "Side Kick," your arms and legs will break the binds and you'll be bouncing off the walls. *Let's Go* is that good—quite possibly the best album of '94.

Tim Armstrong and Lars Frederiksen shred ax and sing in that abrasive raspy punk style without getting on your nerves. Bassist Matt Freeman and drummer Brett Reed play at full-throttle. They are not of this planet.

The whole 23-song shebang was produced by Brett Gurewitz, the guy from Bad

Religion. No big surprise, since Epitaph is his label, same imprint as the Offspring. In fact, fans of Offspring and Green Day should check out Rancid. If this is where punk rock is heading, welcome back. Where ya been?

—GARY CEE

BAD RELIGION

Stranger Than Fiction (Atlantic)

Life at the mall getting you down? Days filled with eating endless products and nights filled with dumb TV just don't provide the joy they once did? Even the rock n' roll you listen to seems dull and bloated. Well, the guys in Bad Religion know exactly how to feel, and they've done something about it. These veterans of the California hardcore scene have cut through all the fat and boredom with this collection of fast n' furious guitar-powered punk rock tunes. Bad Religion make some of the angriest and most intelligent rock

you are ever likely to hear. They have been doing it for over a decade and *Stranger Than Fiction*, their ninth album (first for Atlantic) sees them as revved up and pissed off as ever. Don't forget, these are the guys who taught the Offspring and Rancid how to slam.

—DAVID GRAD

ORGANIZED KONFUSION

STRESS: The Extinction Agenda (Hollywood BASIC)

Of all the hip-hop groups that blasted out of the east coast in '91, Organized Konfusion had to be one of the most slept-on. Period. But it's okay because Pharoah Monche and Prince Poetry have come back doubly as dope with their second effort, *STRESS: The Extinction Agenda*. And while

their poetic vehicle sometimes moves similar to that of an underground west side swang, *STRESS* is underscored with funky, tribal, organically-enhanced beats that stand firm in originality and showcase a model balance of words and music.

Standout cuts include the first single, "Stress," the inspirational "Black Sunday," "Stray Bullet" (a vivid commentary on flippant hand gun use in the 'hoods) and of course, "Let's Organize," which features heavyweight contributions by Tribe's Q-Tip (Jive) and outstanding newcomer O Cee (Wild Pitch). Big ups go out to Organized Konfusion for providing real hip hop. Shit never sounded so good.

—TRACII MCGREGOR

TESTAMENT

Low (Atlantic)

As you'd expect, there's no power shortage on the latest album from Bay Area thrashers Testament: the guitars thunder, the tempos race and singer Chuck Billy still roars with the force of Zeus. If anything, *Low* finds the band getting into even more extreme stuff, as evidenced by the death-metal like growl Billy exhibits on songs like "Dog Faced Gods" and "Legions In Hiding" (which is probably also due to the fact that the band's new lead guitarist, James Murphy, has already done time in such prominent death-metal

outfits as Death, Obituary, Cancer and Disincarnate). Now, if the band could take all that raw power and match it with equally memorable songs, they might have something. Unfortunately, like most of Testament's work, the songs on *Low* meander about nondescriptly—each tune sounding like a slightly faster or slower version of the other. And this time, there's not even Alex Skolnick's truly amazing guitar solos to break up the monotony (he left after the band 1992's *The Ritual*). Pretty low.

—MORDECHAI KLEIDERMACHER

CRISS

Cat #1 (T.N.T.)

It's been 14 years since drummer Peter Criss was ousted from Kiss, and 12 years since his last album, the import-only *Let Me Rock You*. Since then, it's been nothing but one musical and personal disaster after another for Criss (anyone remember him being portrayed by *Star* magazine a few years back as a homeless bum living under a boardwalk? Turns out it was an impostor, but not before we all had a few good laughs), and *Cat #1* wallows in depression and negativity pertaining to such incidents. (Which also include his wife leaving him for his own attorney. Brutal.)

Musically, though, the album is a solid effort. Cuts like "Bad Attitude," "Good Times" and "Bad People Burn In Hell" (having a bad day, Peter?) bring out Criss' early blues and jazz influences, and the contribution from former Kiss guitarist Ace Frehley is top-notch. However, the "unplugged" remake of "Beth," Kiss' smash hit from 1976, is truly pathetic, dragging what could have been a confident album to one that reeks of sour grapes.

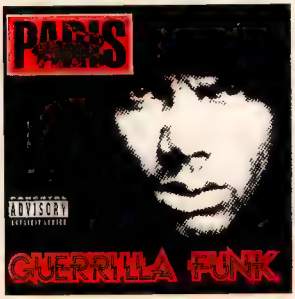
—ROBERT CONTE

PARIS

Guerilla Funk (Priority)

Although the whole concept of funk is rather played, Oakland revolutionary Paris joins the likes of Ice Cube and Dr. Dre and re-resurrects the George Clinton, P-Funk samples anyway. But that's not to say that *Guerilla Funk*, his third, isn't a tight record—it's way tight, complete with soulful crooning, squealing vintage keyboards, driving bass and the occasional dog bark. The problem is that it's all been done before.

Still, Paris insists there is a method to his brand of funk. By adopting the most "popular" sound in commercial rap music, he is able to inject a deep, meaningful message that most kids might never have heard otherwise. Check out his insightful commentary on "40 Ounces And A Fool," "Blacks & Blues" and the title track. Despite some repetitive musical decisions, Paris' persistent and clearly focused political agenda gives *Guerilla Funk* some serious—and important—value. It's just his turn to make you bounce, listen and bounce some more—and Paris handles it with style.



—TRACII MCGREGOR

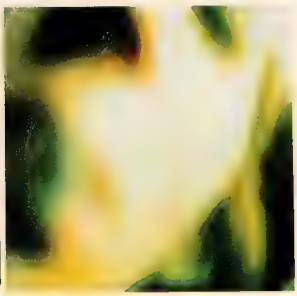
SMASHING PUMPKINS

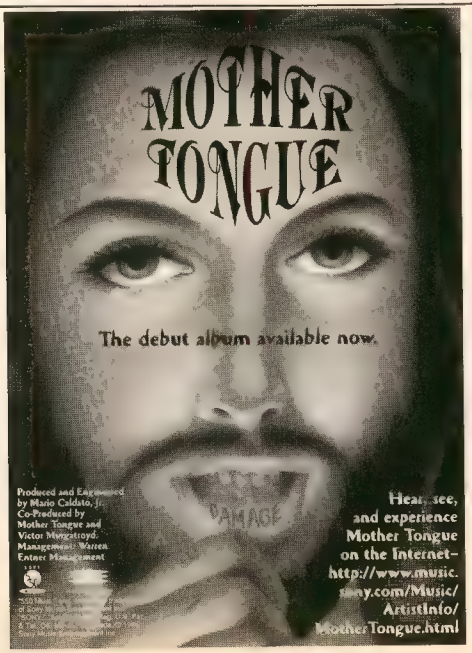
Pisces Iscariot (Virgin)

Virgin Records knows they've got a winner with Smashing Pumpkins, but does anyone besides the most avid fan really need this limp collection of B-sides and rare live radio performances?

Sorry, but this is girlie music.

—GARY CEE

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stuff this

1) STAR WARS WIDE-VISION CARD SET

For the card collector/*Star Wars* fanatic, Topps' new *Star Wars* Widevision series is must-have. These horizontally-oversized cards feature scenes from the first *Star Wars* film in all their widescreen glory—not cropped on the sides, as they normally would be to fit a standard-sized trading card. And the whole 120-card set (plus 10 chase cards) retails for somewhere around $45—which means Ma and Pa won't flinch when the cashier rings it up, and you'll get to see Luke, Han and the gang as they were meant to be seen.

2) LADY DEATH SWIMSUIT SPECIAL #1

When it comes to hot comic book chicks, no one competes with Lady Death. That flowing white hair, those penetrating eyes and revealing outfits—not to mention a rack that, if you stood underneath, would provide plenty of shade on a hot summer day. Yup, Lady Death has the goods—and there's no better place to get a complete viewing of her assets than in the *Lady Death Swimsuit Special #1*, published earlier this year by Chaos! Comics. Asking for this item really depends on how

20 things to demand for Christmas

cool your parents are. If they have a healthy attitude when it comes to your fictional fantasies, then go for it—but if you think you might get clobbered when they come back from the comic shop, try asking an older cousin instead.

3) JURASSIC PARK VIDEO TAPE

The mother of all dinosaur movies is finally available on video, and is a cheap (less than $20) and easy gift for someone who

has either: a) no money, or b) no desire to go any farther than the nearest Blockbuster for your gift. Regardless, you'll have a blast watching those giant dinos devour, slash, spit and trample their way over the screaming inhabitants of Jurassic Park—and straight into your heart (if it doesn't jump out of your throat during that intense T-Rex scene!).

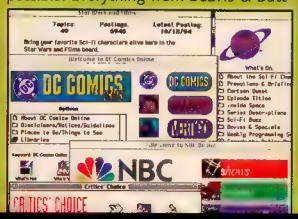
4) GAME GENIE

Any gamer who thinks cheating isn't fair should get a life—or better yet, a Game

Genie. The ultimate weapon against brutal bosses, impossible goalies or that horrible lack of a save feature that so many of today's games suffer from, the Game Genie will enable you to customize just about any game available for the SNES or Genesis. Want to skip levels? No problem. Feel like being invincible? No sweat. Want each basket to be worth 50 points? With a Game Genie, these—and many more—bits of deception and trickery are right at your fingertips. Gaming will never be the same—enjoy it, you worthless cheater!

5) SUBSCRIPTION TO AMERICA ONLINE

If you think all your computer is good for is a hearty round of *DOOM* or writing some crummy essay, think again. With a subscription to America Online, you can have access to things you never thought possible. Everything from *Beavis & Butt-head* sound samples to *Virtua Fighter* combos and sexy pictures of Claudia Schiffer are there for the taking—all you have to do is dial in, sign on and explore. The problem, however, is that once you start, you won't be able to stop. You'll know more than any kid in school, but the hours upon hours you'll spend at your computer will essentially wipe out any chance you thought you had of finding a girlfriend. It's your decision—but we think it's worth the risk.



6) 3DO MULTIPLAYER

Okay, for over a year now, you've watched those over-hyped and overpriced 3DO machines collecting dust in your local video game outlet. You've watched people who think they're cutting edge walk into a store, plunk down 700 smackers for a unit and a few really bad games, thinking to yourself, "What a sucker." But now that the 3DO machine has dropped to a more realistic $399, its value has suddenly gone up. Recent games like

Road Rash, *Twisted*, *FIFA International Soccer* and *Off World Interceptor* are finally showing off the 3DO's capabilities, and the next few months will see even more quality titles hit the shelves. Forget about hypeware like Saturn and Ultra—focus on what's R.E.A.L. and beg someone for a 3DO.

7) SEGA GENESIS 32X

For those who refuse to make the jump to 3DO, Jaguar or any of the other supersystems (or those who just know they'll never get a really expensive game machine for Xmas), the new Genesis 32X might just be the ticket. This $149 (cheap!) attachment plugs right into a standard Genesis machine and turns the lowly 16-bitter into

a revved-up 32-bit (more or less) platform. Which means better graphics, faster action

and greater possibilities—without having to risk buying a whole new system. Your Genesis and Sega CD will continue to play all existing games, plus new 32X games like *DOOM*, *Star Wars Arcade* and *Virtua Racing Deluxe* look promising. And best of all, you can pitch it to potential gift-givers as a simple "attachment" or "accessory" instead of a completely new system (and leave no room for the "Oh, no, not another video game system!!" routine).

8) DOOM II

Hardcore *DOOM*ers, welcome home. A few hordes of hellspawn found their way

to Earth while you were out playing space cowboy on Mars, and now it's time to clean up your own backyard. Besides offering 32 more evil-infested levels of demonic terror for PC compatibles, *Doom II* features a new combat shotgun (sawed off and twice as powerful), a nastier BFG 9000, improved graphics, better constructed levels, and enormous enemies like the Arch-vile, the Mancubus and the aptly-named Pain Elemental. You'll want at least

a 486-based system to make this puppy really scream, so if you don't have one, add that to your list, too.

9) VIRTUALITY MACHINE

Never mind Sega and Nintendo's promises of impending VR systems—the future is now. Hammacher Schlemmer offers the same "Virtuality" virtual reality system seen in arcades and VR exhibits around the world, and they'll deliver it right to your house. Each Virtuality unit comes with everything you'll need to get virtual: a head-mounted display, a hand controller, a playing pod (with padded barriers, for your safety) and the texture-mapped polygon game *Zone Hunter*. But if you want it, you'd better start doing some more chores 'round the house; a set of two will set Mom and Dad back $70,000 (that's seventy-*thousand*-dollars, plus the standard $1,000 shipping and handling charge). You didn't really want to go to college, did you?

10) USED PAC-MAN COIN-OP

Let's see...your parents can shell out $250 for a Jaguar, $300 for a CD-i or $400 for a 3DO. Or, for about the same price (maybe less), they can get you your very own coin-operated arcade machine. Check the classifieds in your local paper (or the Internet newsgroup alt.games.video.collecting) and you'll find some of the gaming world's classics—*Pac-Man*, *Defender*, *Donkey Kong*, *Afterburner*—for rock-bottom prices. Sit-down versions of Atari's *Star Wars* coin-op recently went for $200 (!) at a Texas auction. The arcade game of your dreams can be yours...all you need is the floor space (a rich grandmother wouldn't hurt, either).

11) CLASSIC STAR TREK PHASER/COMMUNICATOR

After years and piles of hideous, chunky toys that neither looked nor sounded anything like the "real" thing, Playmates has

finally gone and hired someone who went straight for the Starfleet Technical Manual of his/her youth and created the best, most dead-on, prop-quality *Star Trek* Phasers and Communicators ever mass-produced. Both units feature authentic detailing, flashing lights and flawless reproduction of the sounds from the original TV series. If you're a Trek nut and your 'rents, friends or lovers won't buy these for you, *they just don't love you anymore.*

12) ARCADE PRO SNES/GENESIS DUAL-COMPATIBLE JOYSTICK

Do you crave control? This controller is the best all-purpose video game controller out there. A nice knobby joystick, six big buttons, indepen-

dent auto-fire switches for each button, a slow-mo option and two cables—one for Genesis, one for Super Nintendo. During field testing, the unit responded great in *Super Street Fighter II* (especially on those charge-down-then-push-up-and-punch moves) and *Mortal Kombat II* on both systems, not to mention making platform performers like *Sonic & Knuckles* and *Super Return Of The Jedi* feel much more arcade-like (and the accuracy-intensive *Dragon's Lair* a lot less frustrating). Xmas morning will never be the same.

13) SPAWN ACTION FIGURES

Power-mad Todd McFarlane started his own toy company (Todd Toys) just so the anxiously-awaited Spawn action figures would be to done exactly the way he wanted. It was worth it, becuase they're jointed, accurate and downright gorgeous. The regular Spawn figure includes rubber chains, a stick with a nail through it and a removable Enormous Cape™. Medieval Spawn comes with a massive, damage-dealing sword and a spinning logo shield. Violator comes with...well, nothing, really. He's a big bendable figure and you can make his mouth move; buy a bunch of 'em and put on demonic puppet shows, if you like. Tremor, Overtkill and Violator's Clown form just hit the shelves, too. Get them all.

14) CASH

Aunts, uncles and grandparents are notoriously willing to help kids save money towards a goal—even if, unbeknownst to them, that goal is another vid game, CD or some super-duper chromium die-cut comic book—so make sure your relatives know pictures of presidents are perfectly acceptible as gifts. Enjoy it while it lasts; in

a few years, the same people will be asking why you don't have a job. And remember, green *is* a traditional holiday color.

15) XBAND MODEM

Now that AT&T's lost their Edge, there's only one Sega modem in town: Catapult's XBAND. Plug the XBAND modem into your Genesis, stick your phone line and your normal copy of games like *NBA Jam*, *Mortal Kombat* (*I* or *II*) or *NHL '94* into it (more titles are on the way), and subscribe to the XBAND network. Wham—with a telephone call, you're online with thousands of other Sega players across the country, and they're all looking for fresh blood. Choose your own network name, image and a verbal taunt for your opponents, and compete in specific tournaments or random matchups. The network keeps track of your win/loss records and you can view your rank compared to any of XBAND's other hotshots at any time. Plus, you can get private electronic mail

and read XBAND's online magazine, *Bandwidth*. We've tried it; it's cool.

16) STAR WARS MICRO MACHINES

The Force will be with you...only smaller. Galoob has released more *Star Wars* vehicles in their Micro Machines collection, plus a gaggle of new mini-playsets like

both a movie location and a famous character—for instance, Jabba's Palace flips

around and changes into a six-inch, 3D replica of R2-D2. The coolest item, however, is the Master Collector's Edition: all 18 ships from the 3-packs plus the Super Star Destroyer *Executor*, available only in that set.

17) SEGA CHANNEL

Imagine calling up your cable company as if you're ordering a pay-per-view movie and spend just a few bucks to download the new *Sonic Disembowels Mario* cart directly to your Genesis. Well, with the Sega Channel, you can. Play existing Genesis games, preview exciting new ones—all without having a stack of costly, sucky carts in a corner collecting dust.

18) UGLY ROGUE ACTION FIGURE

The Rogue action figure finally appeared

in stores a few months back, only to be hastily recalled by Toy Biz. The reason? A face that makes Sauron look like prom queen. With giant, hideous eyes and an ugly growl on her lips, this just isn't the

Rogue we all know and lust. The X-cruciatingly grotesque figure will be fetching large prices at comic conventions soon, but your parents might find one or two stragglers on the shelves. Trust us, they'll know it when they see it.

19) AEROSMITH—BIG ONES ALBUM

If you can stomach hearing "Angel" one more time, Aerosmith's new *Big Ones* (Geffen) greatest hits album contains just about every chart-buster the Bostonian rockers have had since their 1987 *Permanent Vacation* album. "Cryin'," "Livin' On The Edge," "Amazing," "Eat The Rich," "Love In An Elevator," "Janie's Got A Gun," "Dude (Looks Like A Lady)," "Rag Doll"—they're all here. Plus two new tracks, "Walk On Water" and "Blind Man." For anyone who discovered Aero-

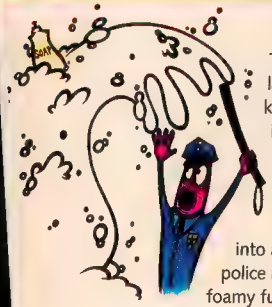
smith in the late-Eighties, *Big Ones* is an essential listen.

20) MAGIC: THE GATHERING CARD GAME

Cool trading cards, no holograms. *Magic: The Gathering*, a fantasy card game from Wizards Of The Coast, arms players with 20 life points and a deck of color-coded magical attacks. Whip up Drudge Skeletons and Glyphs of Destruction to kill your opponent before they kill you. Each 60-card set is dif-

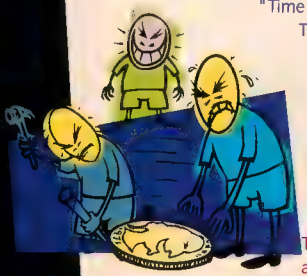
ferent and, with subsets like The Dark and Legends, players can stack their decks with more and more powerful spells. Some of the rarest cards sell for big bucks to collectors. And hey, who wouldn't be willing to trade a Len Dykstra rookie for the ability to Animate Dead?

Don't ever do this



Those super-concentrated laundry detergents—you know, the ones that come in cardboard juice boxes—are inexpensive, environment-friendly and easily concealed, but never dump one into a public fountain. The police might not appreciate the foamy fun.

When you visit your dad at work, never find an unused telephone and dial "9-011-3-117-969-900." At the message, be sure not to press "7" and leave the phone off the hook. The number is for "Time and Temperature" in Tokyo, and it's a pretty expensive call.



Never crazy-glue a quarter to the floor. You wouldn't believe how much time people will spend trying to pick it up.

The next time you're in an airport with your family, never ask your father—in a very LOUD voice—if he remembered to pack the bomb. By law, airport security must report every threat of terrorism, no matter how small, and your parents may not appreciate missing their plane to have a nice chat with the Federal Aviation Administration agents who *will* want to speak with them.

KEVIN HENSON

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X-men

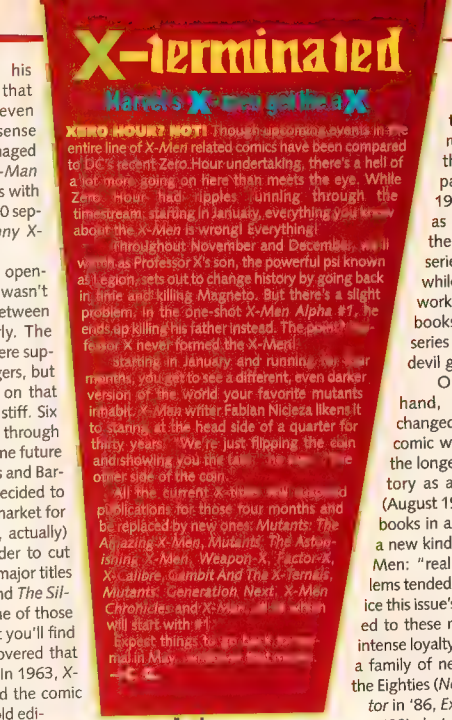
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 56

out of his head that made even less sense when you think about it, but that still managed to join *Superman*, *Batman* and *Spider-Man* books in the elite group of comic families with the most issues published, more than 1000 separate issues over 30 years: *The Uncanny X-Men*.

Even with that great, almost mythical, opening story unfolding behind the scenes, it wasn't smooth sailing for the new title at first. Between 1963 and 1970 the comic sold poorly. The adventures of the young superheroes were supposed to have special appeal for teenagers, but the title's actual readers decided early on that Cyclops and the crew were a little too stiff. Six different writers and eight artists went through the comic on greased rails, including some future greats such as Neal Adams, Roy Thomas and Barry Windsor-Smith. Marvel eventually decided to cancel the title in March of 1970. The market for comics had slowed down (nose dived, actually) after the Sixties boom years, so in order to cut costs, not only *X-Men* but some other major titles got the ax, including *Captain Marvel* and *The Silver Surfer*. But nine months later, in one of those weirdly effective marketing moves that you'll find all over the *X-Men* story, Marvel discovered that there was a market for cheap reprints. In 1963, *X-Men* reappeared—as collectibles!—and the comic sold fairly well for five years, recycling old editions and giving comic-dom its first ongoing series of reprints.

As far as the rest of the Marvel Universe was concerned, the X-Men never really "died," they just sort of hung off the page, consigned to that terrible half universe where characters that don't sell usually end up: guest stardom. Things might have gone on like that indefinitely, but the world of business intervened in the fate of the X-Men again. According to John Townsend's written history of the X-Men, Marvel wanted to launch an international division and figured that a revamped team of mutants might be a good way to introduce it. Since Marvel wanted its stories told uniformly, this would mean reviving the title here in the U.S. as well. It turned out that in another part of the Marvel offices, writer Len Wein was coming up with a major new character called "Wolverine." The two projects were combined in order to save money and production time in 1975. The "new" X-Men were born.

For most X-historians, the years between 1975 and 1991 were the comic's glory days. On one hand (the money hand), that was the period during which *X-Men* grew into one of the most popular titles around. In 1980, the comic officially became Marvel's biggest seller, riding


X-terminated
Marvel's X-men get the axe
ZERO HOUR? NOT!
Though upcoming events in the entire line of X-Men related comics have been compared to DC's recent Zero Hour undertaking, there's a hell of a lot more going on here than meets the eye. While Zero Hour had ripples running through the timestream, starting in January, everything you know about the X-Men is wrong! Everything!
Throughout November and December, we'll witness Professor X's son, the powerful psi known as Legion, sets out to change history by going back in time and killing Magneto. But there's a slight problem; in the one-shot X-Men Alpha #1, he ends up killing his father instead. The point? Professor X never formed the X-Men!
Starting in January and running for four months, you get to see a different, even darker version of the world your favorite mutants inhabit. X-Men writer Fabian Nicieza likens it to staring at the head side of a quarter for thirty years. "We're just flipping the coin and showing you the tails. The other side of the coin."
All the current X-titles will suspend publications for those four months and be replaced by new ones: Mutants: The Amazing X-Men, Mutants: The Astonishing X-Men, Weapon-X, Factor-X, X-Calibre, Gambit And The X-Females, Mutants: Generation Next, X-Men Chronicles and X-Man. All of which will start with #1.
Expect things to go back to normal in May.

writer Chris Claremont's legendary "Dark Phoenix Saga" to the top of every major sales category in the industry. The four part *Wolverine* series of 1982 was a major success as well, helping establish the "adult-oriented" mini series as a safe financial bet, while also laying the groundwork for later violent high-art books, such as the Punisher series and Frank Miller's Daredevil graphic novels.

On the other, creative hand, Claremont's books changed the rules of the monthly comic writing game. Racking up the longest continuous run in history as a writer in a single title (August 1975 to August 1991, 186 books in all), Claremont developed a new kind of superhero with his X-Men: "real" characters, with problems tended to extend beyond how to ice this issue's villain. Readers responded to these new style characters with intense loyalty, which not only spread to a family of new X-related titles during the Eighties (*New Mutants* in '83, *X-Factor* in '86, *Excalibur* and *Wolverine* in '88), but also to new and revived licensing offshoots such as trading cards and action figures. These items had existed for decades (remember Green Lantern decoder rings?) but only started selling consistently enough to justify their own industry after coming out in *X-Men* flavors.

Today, all of this adds up to an entire *X-Men* empire: nine monthly titles, a weekly cartoon series, thousands of *X-Men* products dotting the landscape in between. Does the cartoon feed sales of the action figures? Do the action figures get people to buy the books? Will the proposed movie do better if it follows the comic's chronology or the TV series? When you consider how big the *X-Men* phenomenon has gotten over the last few years, questions like those get harder and harder to answer without a calculator. The only thing you can be sure of is that Professor Xavier's School For Gifted Children is going to keep making piles and piles of money for its owners at Marvel for as far in the future as anyone can see—which is a pretty cool power if you ask me.

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All year long, your parents couldn't give a rat's ass about what you're doing at school. Then your report card comes and they're all in your face. "Oh, we really care about your education," they say. Hey, if your parents cared about your education, they wouldn't send you to that drug-infested, crumbling roach-motel of a school building. Or they'd make sure the teachers would teach something that might actually help you get a job, instead of just lecturing about "feelings" and "sensitivity" and other hippie crap. Prisoners get better treatment!

We at FLUX know that all you want is to get through the school day without getting shot, and not catch any grief at home about your grades. That's why we're introducing the Flux Report Card™, the answer to your end-of-semester problems.

STEP 1: Dude, if you can't figure out what do when someone hands you a BLANK REPORT CARD, you deserve the grades your teachers gave you.

SIGNIFICANCE OF MARKS

SCHOLASTIC MARK - IS BASED ON SUBJECT MATTER ACHIEVEMENT ONLY.
ATTITUDE MARK - IS A STUDENT'S CONTRIBUTION, THROUGH EFFORT AND BEHAVIOR, TO THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

SCHOLASTIC MARKS

A...Performance significantly above curriculum/program standard.
B...Performance above curriculum/program standard
C...Performance at curriculum/program standard.
D...Performance below curriculum/program standard.
F...Performance significantly below curriculum/program standard (failure)
X...Probation (Grades 7-12)
H...Medical Excuse
I....Incomplete
Z...Taking Health This Quarter
E...Withdrawn, failing (Grades 9-12)
J ...Withdrawn, passing (Grades 9-12)
P...Passing (selected courses only)
W...Passing Wind (selected courses only)
T...Auditing Class
L ...Loss of Credits due to Excessive Absenteeism

ATTITUDE MARKS

01 ...Outstanding Attitude
02...Satisfactory Attitude
03....Attitude Needs Improvement
04...Unsatisfactory Attitude
05...Growth Shown in Attitude

PARENTS ARE REQUESTED TO STUDY THIS REPORT CAREFULLY, SIGN AND RETURN IT IMMEDIATELY. SIGNING ONLY INDICATES THAT THE PARENT HAS SEEN THE CARD, IT DOES NOT NECESSARILY INDICATE APPROVAL.

X _____

PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE

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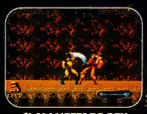
MARVEL COMICS

WOLVERINE®

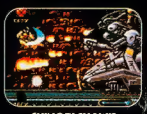
ADAMANTIUM RAGE™

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?



CLAW MEETS TOOTH

I SAW THAT, BUB



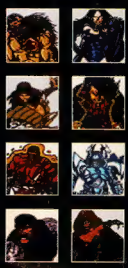
SHINOBI SHAW'S ARMORED ASSASSIN

THE OL' CANUCKLE HEAD RETURNS TO THE WEAPON X™ LAB

WOLVERINE™ BATTLES THE DEMON WITHIN

OLE!

DETHRONE THE BLACK QUEEN™



KIDS TO ADULTS
AGES 6+

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